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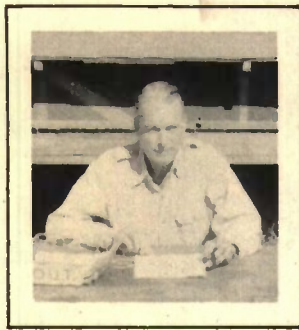
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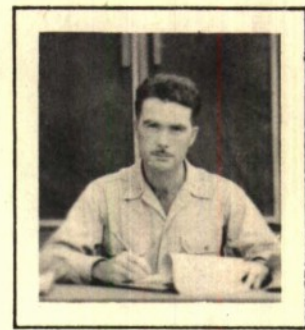
X CORPS on MINDANAO

17 April 45

30 June 45



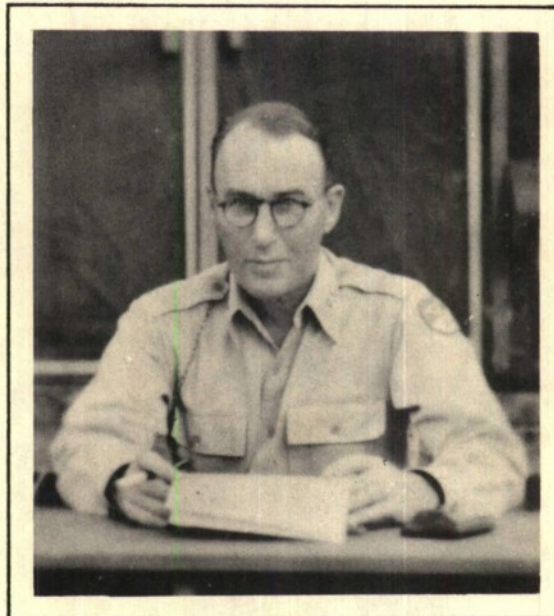
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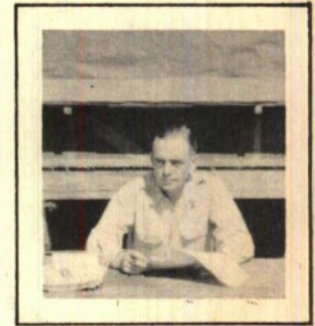
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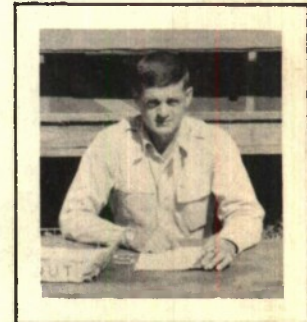
Major General F. C. Sibert
Commanding X Corps



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FOREWORD

Following the official conclusion of the Leyte-Samar Operation, X Corps was relieved of further offensive missions on the two islands; however, minor garrison and police missions continued. In late January, the Americal Division arrived on Leyte and was assigned to X Corps. The Corps was directed to relieve the XXIV Corps of further mopping up operations.

Information gleaned from prisoners and captured documents indicated that several thousand Japanese remained on Leyte, and that they were attempting to reach the hills near Villaba, from which point they hoped to be evacuated from the island by surface craft or submarine. The assembly of a portion of these forces near Villaba was effected, and small scale evacuation efforts were made; but these were disrupted by combined air and MTB patrols.

The Americal Division, in a three-pronged offensive, encircled and destroyed the greater portion of the remaining hostile forces in the Villaba-Sulpa-Hibulungan-Jinagnatan area, with the 164th Infantry advancing from the south; the 182d Infantry from the east; and the 132d Infantry from the north.

Seizure of Capul Island on 19 February and Biri Island on 20 February, cleared the southern entrances to San Bernardino Strait (between Luzon and Samar), the first step in opening the shortest main shipping route from the United States to Manila.

X Corps was relieved of its assigned missions and responsibilities 24 February 1945. Subsequent to this release, and prior to its departure from Leyte on Friday, 13 April 1945, the Corps was engaged in planning and preparing for the Victor Five Operation.

The Victor Five Operation encompassed the Island of Mindanao, exclusive of the Zamboanga Peninsula, a total of 30,067 square miles, occupied by an estimated 35,000 -

40,000 Japs. Principal highways represented an approximate 790 miles. An abundance of short, fast-running streams necessitated the repair or construction of a large number of bridges initially, and subsequently their maintenance. The number of these was so excessive, that in many cases, ferry service was employed. In the one stretch of highway from Parang to Davao (145 miles), bridges averaged one to each mile and one-half of road. The majority of these were destroyed by retreating enemy forces and the remainder required replacement or repair prior to heavy use.

Rains early in the campaign were limited; however, when they came, movement grew more difficult. Consequently, resupply and evacuation presented major problems. The use of aircraft for these services became commonplace. A total of ten captured airfields were put into service for cargo-type planes during various phases. In addition to these, a total of eight fields were constructed or repaired for use by liaison type planes, making an aggregate of eighteen airfields in operation at one time or another.

Normally, rivers are considered military obstacles; however, during the Victor Five two major ones, the Mindanao and the Agusan, were utilized for troop movements, resupply, and evacuation, during offensive phases of the campaign.

In this operation, the relative strength of friendly and enemy forces, the tremendous area involved, extensive distances negotiated, and the short time required to obtain a decisive victory, pay substantial tribute to the courage and aggressiveness of the combat soldier, and to the skill and superior devotion to duty of service troops participating.

PART I

GENERAL

CHAPTER 1

MINDANAO, THE ISLAND

General

An island where extremes are commonplace; where are found fertile soil and worthless swamp; fine natural harbors and cruel rocky reefs; coastlines from steep hills to smooth sandy beaches; transportation from luxury airliner to carabao cart; inhabitants from educated Americans and Europeans to tree-dwelling pagans -- that is Mindanao, the southernmost and second largest island in the Philippine Archipelago.

Mindanao and its adjacent islands lie between latitudes 10° 29' and 5° 21' north and between longitudes 121° 47' and 126° 37' east. Its area of 36,536 square miles compares with the State of Indiana. Population, according to the 1939 census, was 1,997,304. Within the ragged coastline of approximately 1,400 miles, the Island has nine provinces: Agusan, Lanao, Bukidnon, Misamis Oriental, Misamis Occidental, Zamboanga, Cotabato, Davao, and Surigao. There are three chartered cities on Mindanao; Davao and Zamboanga, capitals of the same-named provinces; and Dansalan, capital of Lanao Province. The main towns are Cotabato, capital of Cotabato Province; Iligan, in Lanao Province; Cagayan, capital of Misamis Oriental; Butuan, capital of Agusan Province; Surigao, capital of Surigao Province; Oroquieta, capital of Misamis Occidental; and Dapitan in Zamboanga Province.

The coastline has a number of fine natural harbors, but is lacking in adequate base facilities. Reefs are in abundance, both off-lying and fringing. There are, however, many sections of reef-free, sandy beaches. Rough, rocky coastlines will be found in long stretches, especially along the east and northwest shores.

The greater part of Mindanao is covered with rain forest; however, large areas of grassland are found in Bukidnon, Cotabato, and Misamis Oriental Provinces, with smaller areas in Lanao and Zamboanga. Cultivated areas can be found in all provinces. Most important are in the Mindanao River Valley, adjacent to Davao, Lake Lanao area, coastal regions of Misamis Occidental and Oriental, and the southwest end of Zamboanga. Before the Japanese occupation, many large towns had a permanent water supply from nearby reservoirs. Zamboanga City and Davao City had excellent filtration plants and water supply systems.

History

The history of Mindanao dates back to 1521, forty-four years before the first permanent Spanish colony was established in the Philippines, when Magellan sailed through Surigao Strait and landed on the north end of the Island at the mouth of the Agusan River. Thus, it was the first island in the Archipelago known to have been touched by white men. Don Alvaro de Saavedra visited Sarangani Island, ten miles south of Mindanao in 1528, and in 1543 Villalobos called at Baganga and Manay on the east coast of Davao Gulf. In 1847, after a victory over the local Moros, Captain Jose Uyanguren, Commander of the Spanish Navy, established the province of Neeva Guipuzcoa which was to become Davao in 1860.

Spain ruled the Island through centuries of constant warfare until the Treaty of Paris, 10 December 1898, when the Philippine Islands were surrendered to the United States. However, acquisition by the United States did not end the strife. Active warfare persisted for almost four years. Some of the bloodiest jungle warfare of our military history was waged by the United States Army and the Philippine Constabulary who jointly undertook the pacification of Mindanao. For this reason, the Island remained under an American military government until 4 July 1901 when civil government was instituted.

Population

The 1939 population of Mindanao was placed at 1,997,

304, with an annual increase of approximately two and one-half percent; however, exact figures are not known as many of the remote regions were not included in the census.

The native population consists of three religious elements: Pagans, Christians, and Mohammedans. Dominant among the foreign population were 18,684 Japanese and 14,063 Chinese. There were 682 Americans residing on the Island, and a mixed European population including minor groups of British, Spanish, French, German, and Italian whose total probably did not exceed 1,000.

The Filipino Christian group, to which the majority of the population belongs, is made up mainly of Visayans who migrated from Cebu, Panay, and Bohol, and settled along the coast. Although this group is the largest in number, it takes second place in political power to the half-castes or Mestizos, most of whom are of Spanish or Chinese descent.

The Malayan tribes or Pagans lead a more nomadic life in the interior and along the coast. They engage chiefly in fishing, cultivating rice, and raising livestock and poultry. Included in this group are the Manobos, Bagobos, Mandayas, Bukidnons, Titurays, Subanons, Bilaans, and Negritos.

About 500,000 Mohammedan Moros live on Mindanao, mainly along the coast of the Zamboanga Peninsula, the Cotabato delta region, and around the shores of Lake Lanao. They came to the Philippines many centuries ago, forcing the Negritos into the hills, and taking the coastal areas of the Island. The Moros are divided into tribal groups all differing in customs, manners, and dialects. The most important tribes are the Sulus, Maguindanaos, and Lanaos. Among the lesser tribes are the Yakans, Sangils, Samals, and Bajasos. They are jungle fighters and adept at ambush. The Americans reduced them to comparatively peaceful ways of living through long military campaigns ending in 1913, after the Spanish had tried for three centuries to break their warlike spirit. Since 1913, there have been sporadic outbreaks against the Christian Filipinos, but the Philippine Constabulary succeeded in bringing about a state of superfi-

cial order in the Moro areas.

Americans on the Island prior to the war were engaged chiefly in commercial and industrial occupations, with a small number in government positions. Those who did not return to the United States prior to December 1941, were either interned by the Japanese or escaped into the hills, many later organizing and joining the Filipino Guerrillas. The Europeans likewise were engaged in various commercial and industrial occupations before the war.

The Japanese had been engaged in economic penetration of the Philippines over a number of years. The 1939 census showed a total Japanese population of 29,000 in the Philippine Islands. Of this number, 18,684 lived on Mindanao; 17,888 of these, in Davao Province where there were large Japanese commercial enterprises. The most important enterprise in the Japanese Davao Colony was the raising of abaca which the Japanese had financed and organized along modern lines. According to official figures, seventy percent of the total hemp produced in Davao was grown by the Japanese; the remainder, under their control. Other Japanese were engaged in shipping, fishing, and the lumber industry.

Many retail shops were established to handle wares made in Japan after the Chinese shopkeepers began boycotting these goods in 1931. The Japanese also held stakes in iron, manganese, and copper mines. This flourishing colony in Davao gave them opportunities to work for the Jap militarists, if they chose. There was wide suspicion that many were doing just that and the colony was considered a particular menace.

Although Philippine law restricts foreign ownership of land, the Japanese circumvented this difficulty by intermarrying with the native peoples, and by leasing large tracts through American or Filipino "dummies". They set up their own schools, newspapers, stores, and banks.

To meet the threat implied by continued Japanese immigration, in 1940 the Philippine Government passed a law limiting immigration to the Islands to 500 nationals a year from any one country. Over protests of both Japanese and Chinese, this measure went into effect 1 January 1941.

The 14,063 Chinese on the Island controlled most of the retail trade, and almost no town or village was without its Chinese store. They also controlled a number of rice mills and hand crafts, such as soap making and tailoring. By virtue of the fact that the Filipinos bought mostly from the Chinese storekeeper, their relations were intimate; however, the Chinese also were looked upon as aliens. Their descendants, if married to Filipinos, gradually became accepted.

CHAPTER 2

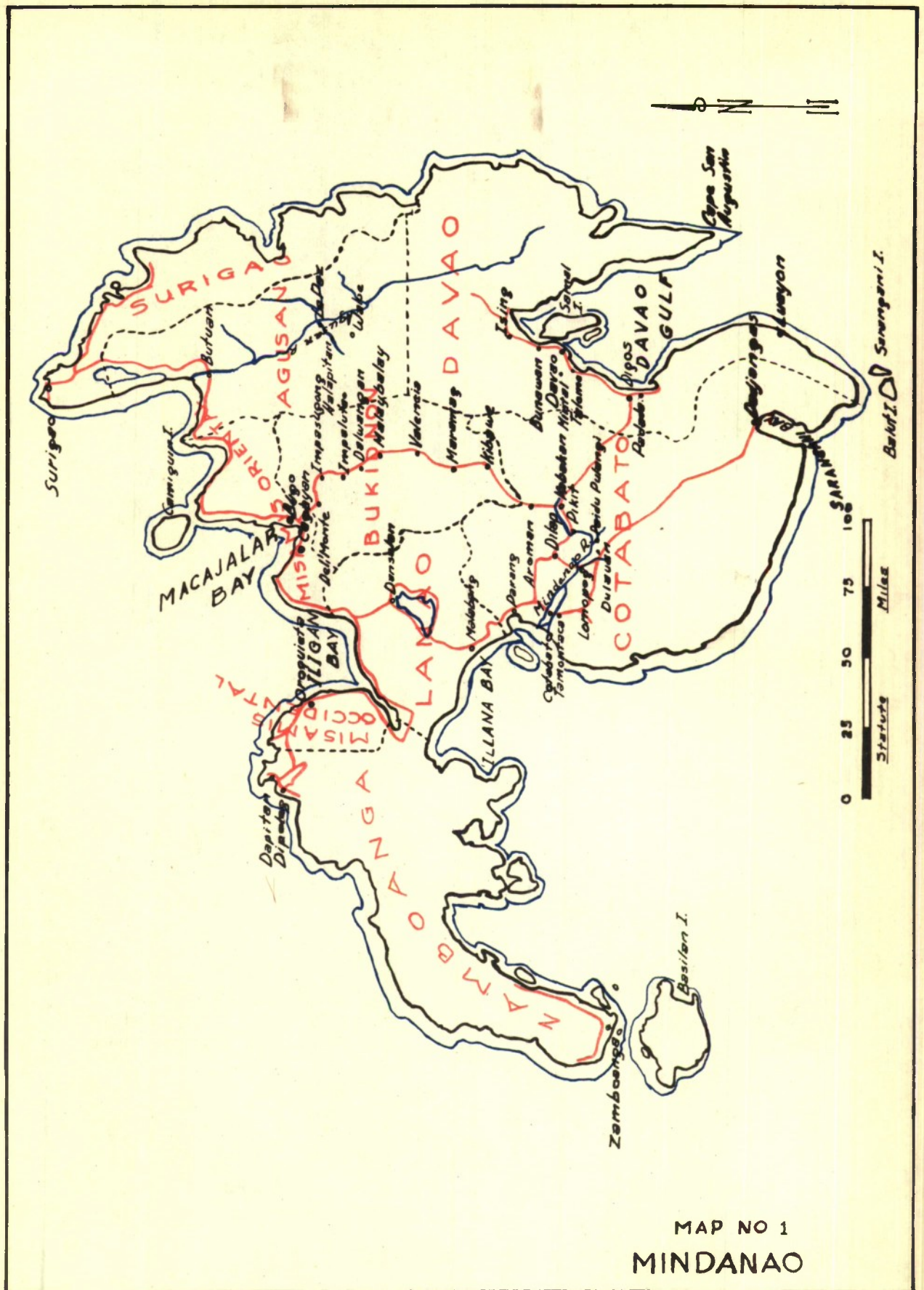
THE ENEMY

Prior to the Victor Five Operation, enemy strength on Mindanao, less Zamboanga, was estimated at 34,000 troops, of which approximately 30,000 were identified. Of this number, 19,000 were with combat or base defense units (Naval), and 11,000 with service units. In addition, an estimated 3,000 - 5,000 poorly armed Jap civilians, conscripted residents of Mindanao, were present on the Island.

The two principal army combat units were identified as the 100th Division and the 30th Division, less the 1st and 2d Battalions, 41st Infantry, and the 2d and 3d Battalions, 77th Infantry. Tactical command of these units, and of the 32d Special Base Force, with attached troops (Naval), was believed to be exercised by the 35th Army.

The combat strength of the 100th Division, a brigaded division composed of eight independent infantry battalions was approximately 9,000. Division Headquarters was located in the Davao area together with the headquarters of its components, the 75th and 76th Brigades. The 5th Naval Battalion, 32d Special Base Force; and the 163d Independent Infantry Battalion were in the Digos-Padada area. In the Sarangani Bay area the 167th Independent Infantry Battalion was identified. The 166th Independent Infantry Battalion garrisoned the Kabakan-Cotabato-Malabang area. The bulk of the support and service units of the division were in the Davao area.

Strength of the reduced triangular 30th Division was placed at approximately 7,000. Last known unit locations before the operation were: the 74th Infantry Regiment and a battalion of the 30th Field Artillery



Regiment in the Northern Cotabato-Southern Bukidnon area, the 1st Battalion, 77th Infantry Regiment, and a battalion of the 30th Field Artillery Regiment in the Northern Bukidnon-Cagayan area and Division support and service units in the Kabakan-Bukidnon area.

The greater part of the identified non-divisional service troops were in the Davao and Cagayan areas. Provisional units formed from armed Jap civilians were believed to be inland from Davao City along the Kibawe-Talomo Trail.

The Malabang-Parang-Cotabato area was defended by an estimated 500-700 troops who were being continuously harassed by guerrilla forces.

There were also small garrisons in the towns along the Mindanao River, and many barge hideouts were located along this major Jap supply route.

CHAPTER 3

DIRECTIVES

The Victor Five Operation was designed to destroy Japanese Forces on Mindanao, the last major enemy stronghold in the Philippines.

By Field Order 26, Headquarters Eighth Army, dated 20 March 1945, and amendments, thereto, X Corps was directed:

(1) On R-Day (Target date 17 April 45), at H-Hour (To be determined), to land by amphibious assault the 24th Infantry Division in the vicinity of Malabang, Mindanao; seize and secure the area, Malabang-Parang-Cotabato; and establish air and minor naval facilities in the objective area.

(2) To arrange directly with the Commanders of Allied Air and Naval Forces for close support.

(3) To assume control and direct the operations of Filipino Guerrilla Forces on Mindanao, east of the Zamboanga Peninsula.

(4) On R plus 5 days, to land the 31st Infantry Division in the Malabang-Parang-Cotabato area, and retain the Division assembled in that area until released by the Commanding General, Eighth Army.

(5) Following the seizure of the Malabang-Parang-Cotabato area, to continue the offensive by overland and overwater operations to destroy hostile forces on Mindanao, east of the Zamboanga Peninsula.

(6) To reestablish civil government in areas reoccupied.

Following preliminary conferences with air, naval, and subordinate ground force commanders, the Commanding General, X Corps, evolved the following plan, promulgated in his Field Order 27, dated 25 March 1945:

24th Infantry Division:

- (1) At H-Hour on R-Day, land two Regimental Combat Teams in the Malabang area.
- (2) Seize and secure a beachhead to include Malabang Town and the Malabang Airdrome.
- (3) Employing a motorized force of not less than one reinforced battalion, and an amphibious force of not less than one company mounted in LVTs, advance south to seize and secure the Polloc Harbor area.
- (4) Hold one Regimental Combat Team in floating reserve, prepared to assist in the seizure of the Polloc Harbor area by amphibious assault against Parang.
- (5) On securing the Parang area, dispatch a motorized force to seize and secure the Junction of Highways #1 and #5, and the Cotabato area.
- (6) Reconnoiter southeast along Highways #1 and #5, and up the Mindanao River, to determine the suitability of these as major supply routes.
- (7) Concentrate the Division (less not to exceed one reinforced battalion in the Malabang area) in the Parang-Cotabato area, prepared for future offensive operations.

31st Infantry Division:

- (1) On R plus 5, land in the previously secured Parang area.
- (2) Prepare for offensive operations.

The order of the 24th Infantry Division directed the 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry, to land in assault on Red Beach at H-Hour. Simultaneously, the remainder of the 21st Infantry was to land on White Beach, and the 19th Infantry on Blue Beach, all in the Malabang area.

The Commanding Officer, 19th Infantry, was further directed to initiate an advance south toward Parang immediately upon landing. The drive towards Parang was to be made by not less than one motorized Infantry Battalion moving overland, and an amphibious force of not less than one company in LVTs.

The 34th Infantry, in floating reserve, would be prepared to support the beachhead at Malabang and, on R plus 2, land on Green Beach in the Parang area either in assault or administratively, depending upon the speed of advance of the forces moving south from Malabang.

The Commanding General, X Corps, departed Leyte on 10 April to join the Naval Task Group Commander aboard his flagship, the U.S.S. Wasatch, at Mindoro. Shortly after his arrival at Mindoro, reports were received indicating that Guerrilla Forces had seized the Malabang Airstrip. Based on these reports, and pending confirmation, an alternate landing plan was formulated.

The alternate plan directed the landing of the 24th Infantry Division on Green Beach (Parang) at Y-Hour, less one battalion to be landed as originally planned on Red Beach. In this plan, landings originally scheduled for White and Blue beaches were cancelled. All Regimental Commanders were oriented on the alternate plan.

When the reported seizure of the Malabang Airstrip was confirmed and the capture of Malabang Town reported, the Commanding General, X Corps, with the concurrence of Commander Task Group 78.2, ordered that the alternate plan be placed in effect. On the basis of this directive, a new field order was published by the 24th Infantry Division aboard the U.S.S. Wasatch, and on R minus 1, while the Mindoro and Leyte convoys were forming at Zamboanga, all commanders were notified that landings would be made according to the alternate plan.

CHAPTER 4

TRAINING

All major units participating in the Victor Five Operation were well trained for, and experienced in, amphibious warfare.

Approximately one hundred key officers of the 24th Infantry Division attended a Command and Staff Course at the Amphibious Training Center, Port Stephens, New South Wales, during a two weeks period in September 1943. During the last three months of 1943 the Division received its basic troop training for amphibious operations at the Amphibious Training Center, Toorbul, Queensland. Training was by Regimental Combat Team, three weeks being devoted to each. One-third of the Divisional Troops were trained concurrently with each Regimental Combat Team. Subsequently, the Division landed in assault at Hollandia, Netherlands, East Indies, on 22 April 1944, and at Palo, Leyte, on 20 October 1944. Elements of the Division also participated in the Western Visayan Task Force landing at San Jose, Mindoro, on 15 December 1944, and the Zambales Coast, Luzon, landing on 29 January 1945.

The 31st Infantry Division trained in the technique of amphibious operations for two weeks in September 1943 at Camp Pickett, Virginia, under the supervision of the Atlantic Fleet Training Force. Following this training, the three Regimental Combat Teams, and Division Special Troops successively completed two weeks training at Camp Bradford, Virginia, also under the supervision of the Atlantic Fleet Training Force.

In October, 1943, the 31st Reconnaissance Troop and selected men from the other combat units of the Division, underwent thorough training in all phases of amphibious operations, placing special emphasis on small-group, re-

connaissance landing, under supervision of the Joint Army-Navy Scouts and Raiders School at Fort Pierce, Florida.

All Battalion Landing Teams of the Division underwent a six weeks training program at Oro Bay, Australian New Guinea, in May-June 1944 making practice assault landings.

Subsequently, the Division made an amphibious assault on Morotai 15 September 1944, and elements of the Division made landings on the Mapia and Asia Islands in November 1944.

The 162d Regimental Combat Team, 41st Infantry Division, was trained in amphibious landings at Rockhampton, Newcastle, and Toorbul Point, Australia, and at Oro Bay, Australian New Guinea.

On 29-30 June 1943, the Regiment made assault landings on Nassau Bay; and from July to September elements of the entire regiment made a series of small landings from Nassau Bay to Salamaua, all in Dutch New Guinea.

Subsequent landings were made at Hollandia on 22 April 1944; Biak Island and the Schouten Islands on 27 May 1944; Soepiori Island adjoining Biak Island on 7 September 1944; Zamboanga Peninsula, Mindanao, on 10 March 1945 and 5 April 1945; Basilan Island in the Sulu Archipelago on 16 March; and Sibago Island southeast of the Zamboanga Peninsula on 26 April 1945.

The 108th Regimental Combat Team, 40th Infantry Division, engaged in periods of training in amphibious landings at the Waianai and Waimanila Amphibious Training Centers, Oahu, T.H. Subsequently the Regiment made an amphibious landing at Lingayen Gulf, Luzon, on 9 and 10 January 1945.

PART II

THE OPERATION

CHAPTER 1

THE AMPHIBIOUS PHASE

X Corps staged at Mindoro, Leyte, and Morotai for the Victor Five Operation. The amphibious lift, convoy escort, and Naval gunfire support were furnished by Naval Task Group 78.2, under the command of Rear Admiral A. G. Noble, U.S.N.

The 24th Infantry Division, reinforced, departed Mindoro at 1115, 14 April (R minus 3) and Headquarters X Corps, with task force units, departed Leyte at 1600, 13 April (R minus 4). The two convoys rendezvoused off Zamboanga on the afternoon of 16 April (R minus 1), and regrouped into the assault formation for movement to the objective areas under the cover of darkness.

On the morning of 17 April (R-Day), preliminary operations were conducted on Ibis Island, in the Malabang area, and Bongo Island, in the Parang area, to clear the entrances to the landing beaches.

Elements of the 533d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment landed on Ibis Island at 0737 (H minus 23) and reported the Island clear of enemy at H minus 15.

Company K, 21st Infantry, landed unopposed on Bongo Island at H minus 15 and soon reported the Island unoccupied.

The preliminary bombardment of Green Beach (Parang), by two cruisers and four destroyers began at 0630.

The 3d Battalion (-), 21st Infantry, made an unopposed landing on Red Beach, in the vicinity of Baras, at 0800 on R-Day. Elements of the Battalion pushed rapidly to the South, and occupied Malabang and the Malabang

Airstrip by 1030. Security was established to include the initial beachhead and the Malabang area; while patrols were dispatched northeast toward Lake Lanao and south toward Parang.

The main landing was made on Green Beach at Parang by the 19th Infantry in a column of battalions. The leading wave landed at 0900 (Y-Hour), and by 0918, five waves had landed without opposition.

The assault echelon, the 2d Battalion, 19th Infantry, rapidly expanded the initial beachhead and secured the entire town of Parang.

The balance of the regiment was landed immediately thereafter and passed through the initial beachhead with the 1st Battalion in the lead.

Major General Roscoe B. Woodruff, Commanding General, 24th Infantry Division, assumed command ashore at 1010.

The 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, pushed southeast along Highway #1 and by 1500 secured the high ground four miles southeast of Parang. One section of the 240-foot covered bridge across the Nituan River had been burned, necessitating fording of the shoulder-deep river. A bridge across a smaller river 300 yards southeast of the Ambal River was also destroyed and again fording was necessary.

The 3d Battalion passed through the 1st Battalion at 1500 and continued the drive south. The only vehicles south of the Ambal River at the end of the first day were six half-tracks which were pulled across the River by bulldozers.

The 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, landed at 1230 and relieved the 2d Battalion, 19th Infantry, of the security of the beachhead. The 2d Battalion, 19th Infantry, then moved southeast on Highway #1 to a position one mile south of Parang. The 2d Battalion, 21st Infantry, landed at 1330 and went into position in the immediate beachhead area at Green Beach.

The 34th Regimental Combat Team remained afloat in Division Reserve.

The 24th Division Reconnaissance Troop conducted over-water reconnaissance by LVT from Parang, northwest to Tugapangan Point and southwest to Polloc Island, thence to the mouth of the north branch of the Mindanao River.

The two landings, reconnaissances, and push inland on R-Day were made at the cost of only two casualties: one officer, Colonel William J. Verbeck, Commanding Officer of the 21st Infantry, and one enlisted man, were wounded.

Following the success of the initial landings and subsequent advance on R-Day, attention was turned to the following day's plan which called for seizure of Cotabato and Tamontaca by one battalion of the 21st Infantry, supported by elements of the 533d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment. A coordinated attack by dive bombers, cruisers, and destroyers had been made on the Cotabato area on R-Day.

The plan of attack on Cotabato and Tamontaca was a simultaneous forcing of both the north and south mouths of the Mindanao River, followed by the landing of one reinforced rifle company at Tamontaca and the remainder of the battalion at Cotabato. Direct fire support would be furnished by Naval LCSs and EB & SR LCM gunboats.

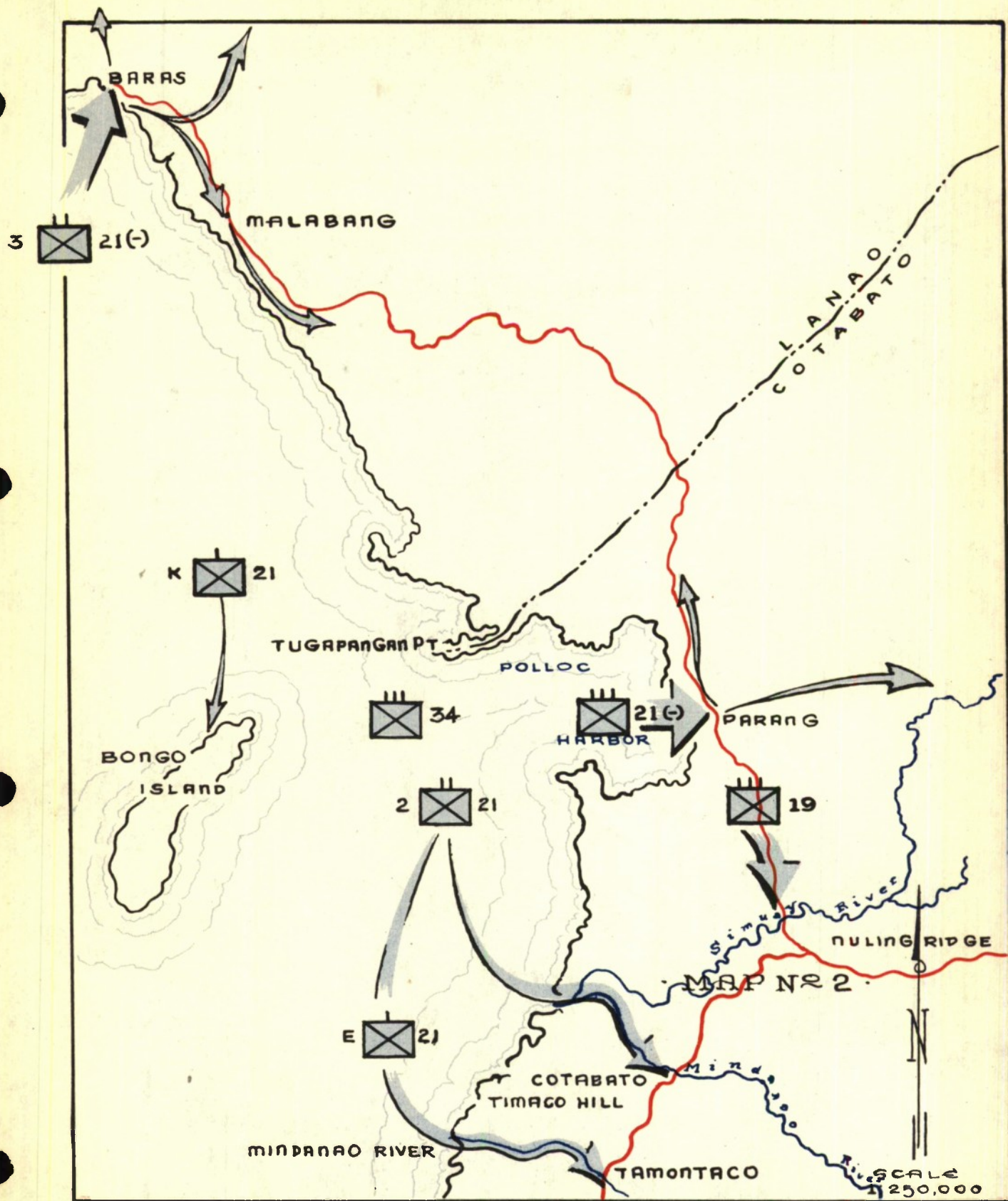
A destroyer delivered intermittent harassing fire on Cotabato Town, Cotabato Hill, and Tamontaca from 2000 to 0700, 17-18 April. From 0700 to 0804, a cruiser and two destroyers bombarded these same areas in direct support of the inland movement and subsequent landings. A total of 1030 rounds of five and six inch projectiles were fired into the landing areas.

The troops were embarked at night and proceeded toward the Mindanao River. At dawn, R plus 1, the convoys proceeded independently to the River mouths. At 0900, the two assault groups started upstream and reached their initial objective areas without opposition. A final intensive bombardment was laid on the two towns, including naval gun fire, 500 pound

bombs, aerial and naval rockets, and automatic cannon fire from the gunboats.

The Battalion, less Company E, seized Cotabato at 0938 and Company E landed unopposed at Tamontaca at 0955.

The occupation of the Cotabato area on R plus 1 marked the completion of the Corps R plus 5 objective, four days ahead of schedule; and secured bases from which one of the few offensives, over an inland water-way, during the history of modern warfare, was to be launched.



CHAPTER 2

THE ADVANCE TO KABAKAN

To rapidly exploit the success of the initial landing, a two-pronged drive across the Island was ordered; the first, by water up the Mindanao River, and the second, an overland advance on Highway #1. The objective was the town of Kabakan, midway between Parang and Davao Gulf, controlling the junction of Highway #1 and Highway #3 (Sayre Highway). He, who controlled that junction, controlled the Island's road net.

Resistance encountered during the advance was offered by elements of the 166th Independent Infantry Battalion, which was garrisoning western Cotabato Province.

Loading elements of the 19th Infantry reached the junction of Highways #1 and #5 by 1320, 18 April, and a patrol was dispatched south along Highway #5 to contact a 21st Infantry patrol moving north from Cotabato. The 3d Battalion pushed on and secured Nuling Ridge, 2,500 yards east of the junction, by the evening of R plus 1.

Patrols from the 24th Division Reconnaissance Troop reconnoitered Timaco Hill and Linok on 18 April, and found both areas clear of enemy forces.

Major General F. C. Sibert, Commanding General, X Corps, assumed command ashore at 1900, 18 April, and established his command post at Parang.

On the morning of 19 April, the 2d and 1st Battalions, 19th Infantry, passed through the 3d Battalion on Nuling Ridge; and, by 1600 leading elements of the 2d Battalion were approximately eight miles east of the junction of Highways #1 and #5.

Preparations were made to press the advance up the Mindanao River to trap enemy troops between the River and Highway #1.

Company F, 21st Infantry, accompanied by Naval and Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment support craft, proceeded up the north branch of the River, and one platoon of Company E moved up the south branch from Tamontaca.

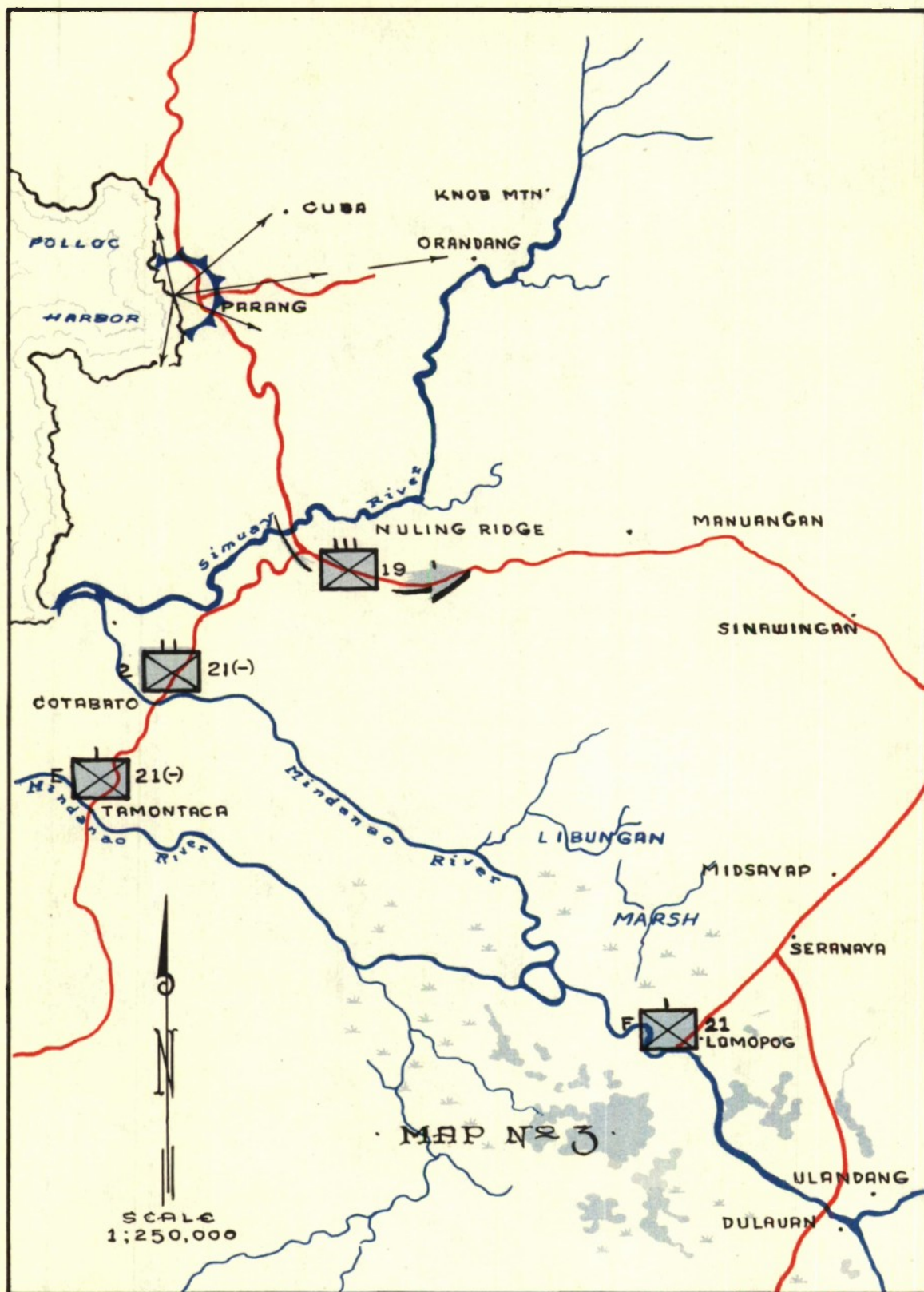
The movement upstream met only slight opposition. A short fire fight developed on the south branch of the River in which all but one of the defending Japs were killed.

It was reported by Guerrillas that fifty Japs were entrenched at Tambau, just south of the river junction. Preparations were made for an assault landing at this point, but it proved unnecessary, as the enemy had fled into the swamps upon approach of the convoy.

Civilians reported 200 Japanese, armed with automatic weapons, dug in at Lomopog. As Lomopog was at the first road and river junction east of Cotabato, and would enable our troops to contain the enemy retreating before the overland advance of the 19th Infantry, orders were issued to assault and capture the town.

Support craft were massed and over 100 rockets and heavy 40mm and 37mm fire were placed on the town and an enemy position on the opposite side of the River. Resistance was quickly broken, and at 1700, a landing was made and Lomopog captured. A patrol was immediately pushed to the northeast towards Seranaya.

On the morning of R plus 2, a reinforced platoon, accompanied by support craft, left Lomopog to reconnoiter the River as far east as Ulandang and Dulauan. The reconnaissance party reached Ulandang at 1030 and found that the enemy had withdrawn, abandoning large stores of arms and supplies, only ninety minutes before their arrival. The road leading north from Ulandang was reconnoitered but found unsuitable for vehicular traffic. The Dulauan area, on the opposite bank of the River, was also reconnoitered, and found clear of enemy forces.



The reconnaissance force reembarked and proceeded to Paidu Pulangi. After a brief bombardment, a landing was made at 1300. Evidence indicated another hasty enemy withdrawal. The seizure of Paidu Pulangi represented an advance inland of forty-three miles from the mouth of the river in only thirty-one hours. The rapidity of the advance kept the enemy off balance, and was largely instrumental in preventing his establishment of strong defensive positions.

The 34th Infantry began debarking on the morning of R plus 2 and moved into a staging area in the vicinity of Parang. Company F, first element of the regiment to complete unloading, departed Polloc Harbor by LCM to reinforce Company F, 21st Infantry, on the Mindanao River. Upon arrival at Ulandang the following day, Company F, 34th Infantry, established a river block at that point.

On R plus 3, residents of Lomopog reported to Company F, 21st Infantry, the presence of seventy-five enemy in a coconut grove 1,000 yards southeast of Lomopog. Two platoons of the company attacked the enemy force and killed thirty-one.

On Highway #1, the 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, took the lead on 20 April, and by 1800, loading elements were approximately three miles east of Manuangan. Movement on Highway #1 was very difficult due to intense heat and high grass which had overgrown the road.

The following day, loading elements reached Dilap, and construction was started on a raft to ferry jeeps across the 300-foot Libungan River.

The 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, and Battery A, 63d Field Artillery Battalion, departed Polloc Harbor by LCM at 0930, 20 April, for Paidu Pulangi via the Mindanao River. The battalion closed at Lomopog at dusk, and early the next morning completed the move to Paidu Pulangi.

Reconnaissance had shown that further advance by both road and river was feasible. The plan was to drive northwest by road employing the battalion less one company. That

company would continue amphibious movement up the River to envelop the expected enemy defenses at Fort Pikit.

Both forces moved out of Paidu Pulangi at 1100 on R plus 4. The amphibious force, comprising Company A, 34th Infantry, reinforced by PGMs and LCM(G)s, arrived at Inogog at 1400 where information was received from Guerrillas that 600 enemy were dug in on the east bank of the River south of Pikit Ferry, and an additional 200, supported by two 2.95" mountain guns, north of the Ferry.

Based on this information, Company A, 34th Infantry, was directed to land one and one-half miles downstream from the Ferry and move north covered by fire from the supporting craft. The landing was made and the attack on Pikit was underway. Heavy fire was placed on the reported enemy defensive positions. Enemy fire was quickly silenced, and Pikit Ferry was occupied. The balance of the battalion, moving overland, entered Pikit simultaneously with the amphibious force. Patrols were dispatched to Fort Pikit which was occupied at 1600. Thus, the escape route of enemy forces retreating before the 19th Infantry was cut, forcing them to disperse to the mountains north of the Dilap-Pikit area.

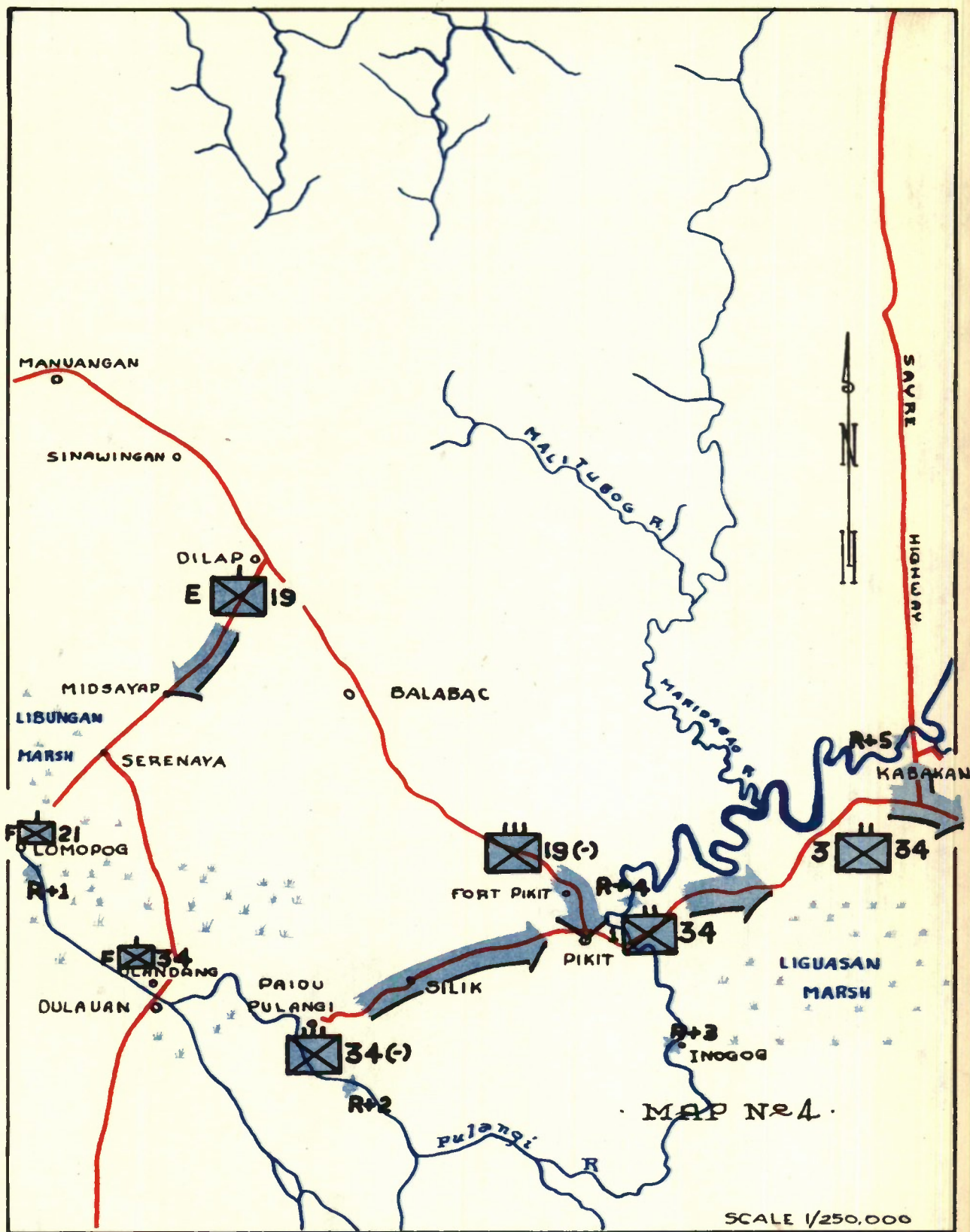
The 19th Infantry continued the advance east on Highway #1 on 22 April. Company E was motorized and moved south from Dilap to secure Midsayap. The move toward Pikit was by shuttle, jeeps and trailers being ferried across the Libungan River by cable-drawn rafts. The 2d Battalion, in the lead, reached a point three miles southeast of Balabac. However, a motorized patrol from the I & R Platoon reached Pikit and contacted the 34th Infantry, completing the dispersion of the enemy caught by the rapid advance on the Highway and the River.

During the night of 21-22 April, the 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, arrived at Fort Pikit in LCMs and was assigned the mission of capturing the junction of Highways #1 and #3 in the vicinity of Kabakan.

The Mindanao River had been dropping rapidly, so further large scale movement by water beyond this point had to be abandoned. However, reconnaissance elements were dispatched on the river toward Kabakan concurrent with the drive by the 34th Infantry to secure the junction of Highways #1 and #3. Both forces departed at daylight on R plus 5. The 3d Battalion met strong resistance near the road junction, but it was broken and by dark of R plus 5 the critical road junction had been secured.

The overwater force moved up the river against scattered resistance, but with considerable difficulty because of the low water level. The ferry crossing at Kabakan was secured and early in the morning R plus 6, a junction was effected by elements of the 3d Battalion at the ferry site.

The seizure of Kabakan and the junction of Highways #1 and #3 severed the main overland communications between the two principal hostile forces, the 30th Division on the north, and the 100th Division on the east, rendering these units incapable of further mutual support or major reinforcement.



CHAPTER 3

THE CAPTURE OF DAVAO

On the morning of R plus 5, the 31st Infantry Division arrived in the initial objective area and commenced debarking.

In accordance with Field Order No. 28, X Corps, relief of the 24th Infantry Division in the Malabang, Parang, and Cotabato areas was effected, releasing rear elements of the 24th Infantry Division for further offensive action to the east.

On the morning of R plus 6, the 34th Infantry, followed by the 19th Infantry, resumed the drive east on Highway #1. By the evening of R plus 9 a point 2,500 yards west of Digos had been reached, representing an advance of more than forty miles in four days.

The advance from Kabakan was interrupted by only sporadic enemy delaying actions by small groups which were rapidly brushed aside.

The condition of bridges, however, remained an obstacle to the overland drive. The retreating Japanese destroyed all important bridges on Highway #1, but failed to slow the advance appreciably. Ferries were improvised to move vehicles across the Libungan River, and LCMs were operated 24 hours a day at the Pulangi River crossing at Pikit until bridges could be constructed. By-passes were constructed and bridges built in an amazingly short time. As a result, the rapidly advancing troops were seldom out of supporting artillery range. Air drops successfully supplied the leading elements and trucks were soon brought forward to shuttle relieving elements forward.

On the morning of 27 April, the 34th Infantry entered the town of Digos, and a sharp engagement developed when the



ONE OF THE 176 DESTROYED BRIDGES ENCOUNTERED BY ADVANCING AMERICAN TROOPS. CIVILIANS ON THE OPPOSITE BANK OF RIVER WAIT FOR YANKS TO CROSS.



GENERAL VIEW OF A RADIO LINK REPEATER STATION AT PADADA AIRSTRIP.

leading elements encountered units of the Japanese "Digos Sector Command" in the town.

The "Digos Sector Command" was composed principally of the 163d Independent Infantry Battalion and the 5th Naval Battalion. Apparently, the mission of the elements encountered was to delay our advance sufficiently to permit the withdrawal of the Command from the Digos area into the mountains towards Gura, and eventually to the Calinan area.

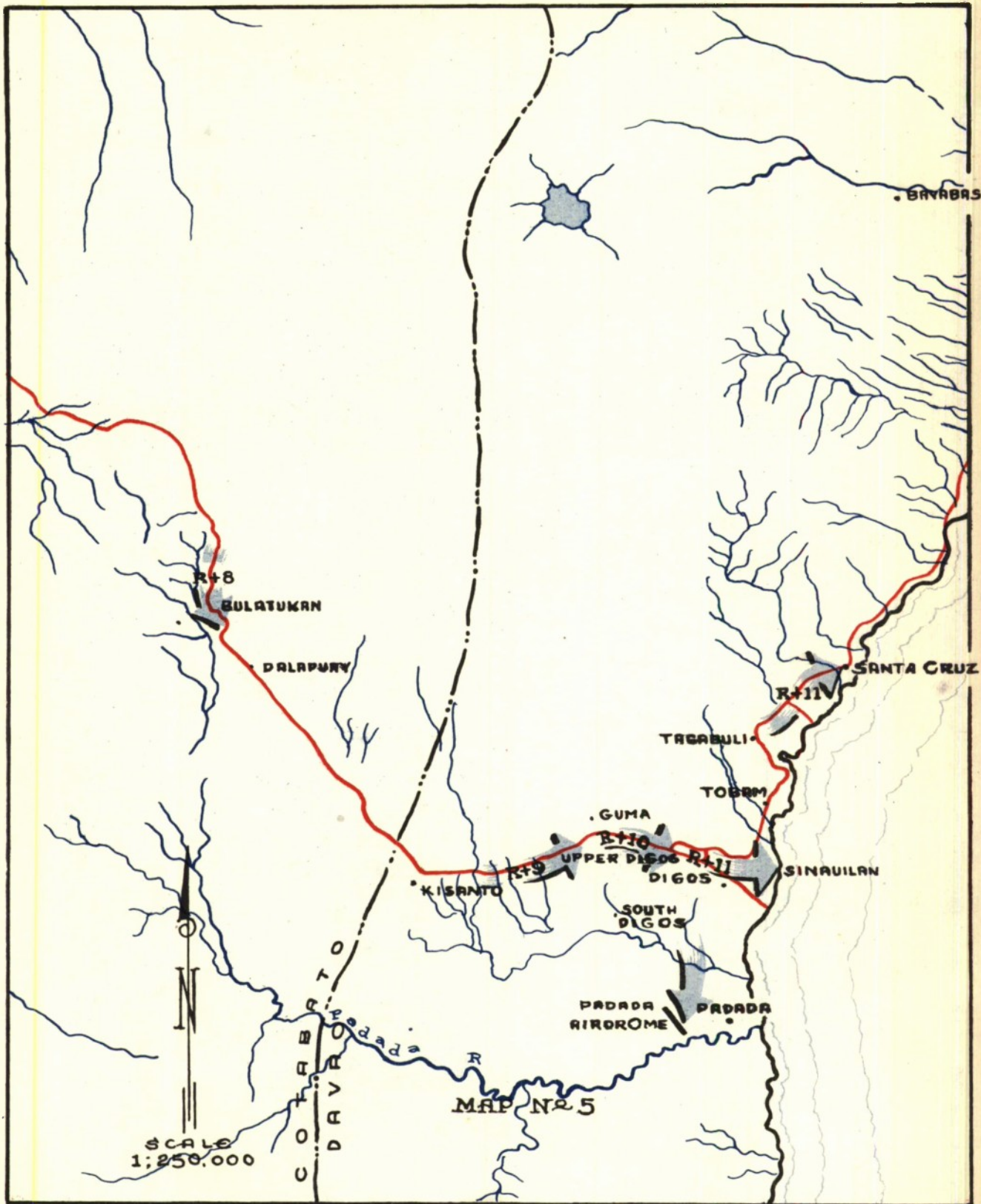
The 1st Battalion crossed the Digos River, then moved eastward along a road parallel to Highway #1, and on line with the 2d Battalion, where enemy resistance was also encountered. After a sharp fight, hostile positions were overrun.

The 3d Battalion passed through the 2d Battalion and reached the coast of Davao Gulf on the morning of R plus 11. Simultaneously, the 1st Battalion moved on and seized Sinuilan, while Company F drove south and captured Padada Airdrome. The Digos area was secure.

On 28 April, the 19th Infantry passed through the 34th Infantry in Digos and pushed northeast on Highway #1 towards Davao. The 1st Battalion moved by road through Sinuilan and secured Tobam. The 3d Battalion moved cross-country from upper Digos and took the high ground overlooking Tagabuli, to protect the flank of the regiment moving along the Highway. The 2d Battalion was motorized and, preceded by the 24th Reconnaissance Troop, pushed into Santa Cruz against increasing enemy delaying actions. Large scale use of mines was encountered, however the crudity of the mine laying permitted rapid discovery and removal.

On 29 April, the 2d Battalion continued its drive to a point 2,000 yards south of Darong Airfield. The advance was made against strong enemy road blocks consisting of felled trees covered by automatic weapons and mortar fire.

Meanwhile, the 31st Infantry Division moved to the Kabakan area, and the rear boundary of the 24th Infantry Division was moved forward to the Tanculan River, releasing the 21st Infantry from guarding a long line of communications.)



SECRET



VIEW OF HILLSIDE COMMANDING RUNWAY OF MATINA AIRFIELD.



THIS JAP TRUCK CARRYING MEN AND EQUIPMENT RAN INTO A 19th INFANTRY ROAD BLOCK WITH RESULTS AS SHOWN.

SECRET

On 30 April, the 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, passed through the 2d and 3d Battalions and advanced to capture Talomo after a brisk fight. The following morning, the advance was continued to a point 3,000 yards northeast of the Talomo Road Junction. From there, the Battalion moved overland and secured the eastern nose of Hill 550 overlooking Davao City. The flanks were secure and preparations were initiated for the attack on Davao.

On the morning of 2 May, heavy artillery concentrations were placed on both banks of the Davao River in support of the attack on the City. Under cover of this fire, the assault battalion, the 3d Battalion, 19th Infantry, moved to the south bank of the river. The enemy concentrated his artillery and antiaircraft weapons, emplaced in the hills behind Davao, on the point where the crossing was expected.

However, alternate crossings had been reconnoitered in advance further upstream, and the 3d Battalion moved rapidly to one of these. A complete surprise was effected, and before the Japanese fires and defending troops could be shifted to meet the attack from this unexpected direction, the assault troops had constructed a foot crossing over a damaged bridge. Rapidly the crossing was made and a bridgehead secured.

The battalion pressing its advantage extended its area to a depth of one mile and consolidated its newly won gains.

Meanwhile, the 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, drove north from Bago on 1 May and seized Mintal. The 2d Battalion followed the 1st to Bago and from there moved to the north end of Libby Airdrome. Supported by fires of the 2d Battalion, 19th Infantry, Libby was secured by the 2d Battalion, 21st Infantry, after a stubborn fight by the Japanese Airfield Battalions which had been assigned the defense of the Drome.

The 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, was motorized and moved from the Digos area to the south end of Libby Airdrome, relieving the 2d Battalion, 19th Infantry, which moved to the Matina Drome area on the afternoon 2 May.

SECRET



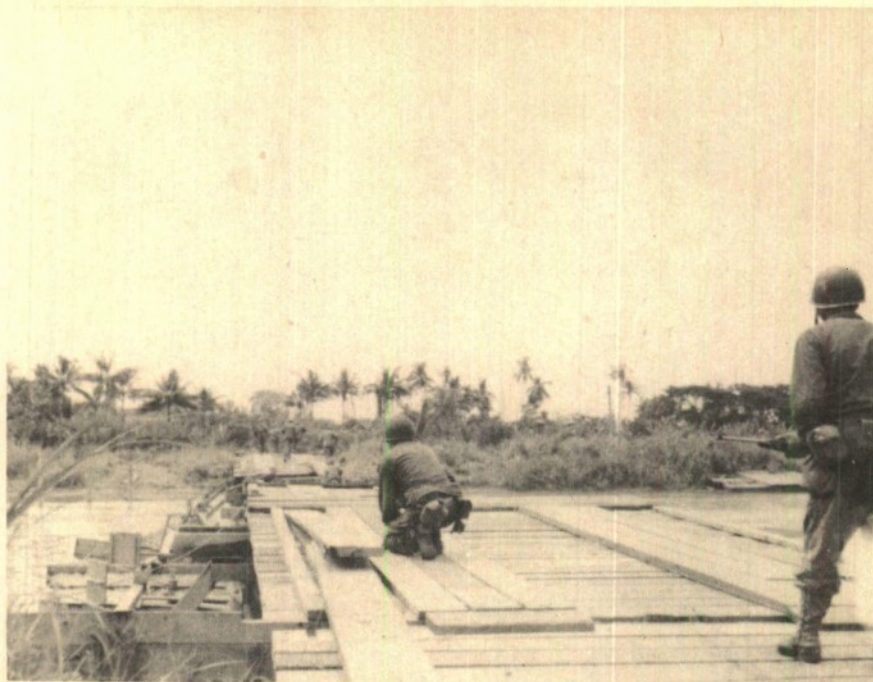
ELEMENTS OF THE 19th INFANTRY APPROACHING
DAVAO CITY.



DESTROYED BRIDGE NEAR DAVAO

SECRET

SECRET



CROSSING THE LAST BRIDGE BEFORE DAVAO CITY
UNDER FIRE.



INSIDE DAVAO

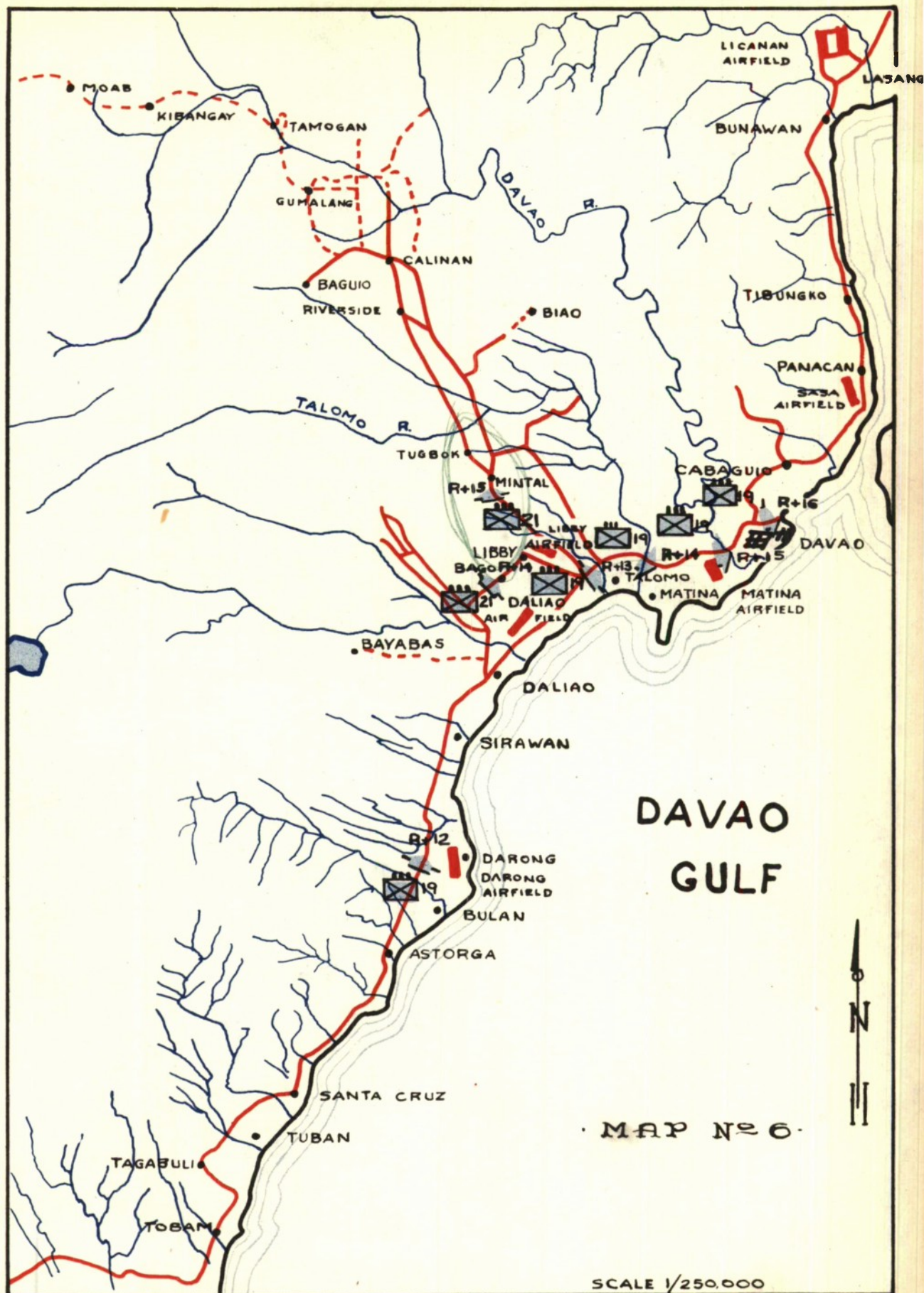
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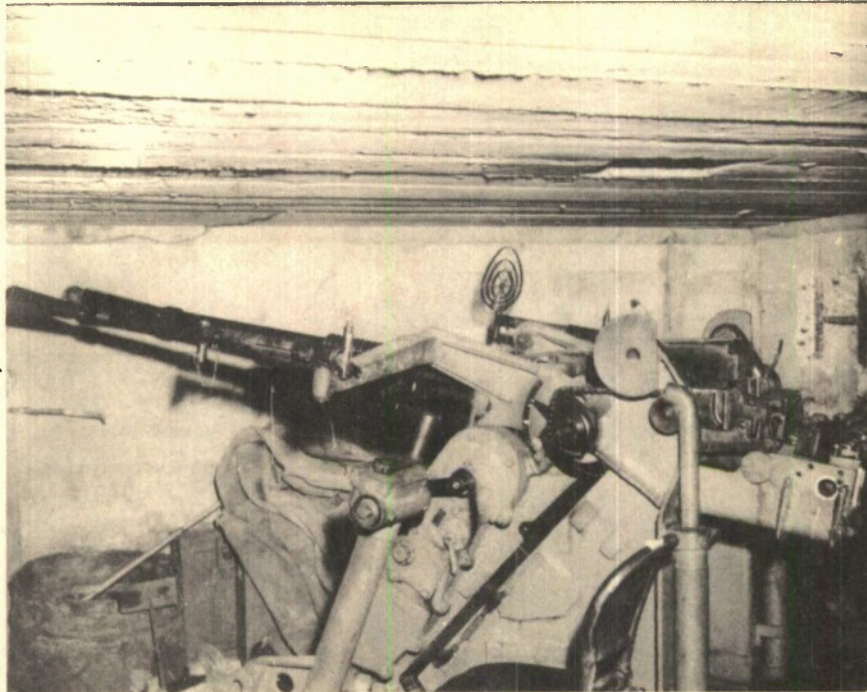
Then enemy resistance flared on all fronts in the Davao area. During the night 2-3 May, strong enemy counterattacks were launched in the Davao and Mintal sectors but all were repulsed and heavy losses were inflicted on the Japanese. Enemy guns, in position on the ridges along the northeast bank of the Talomo and Davao Rivers, fired on our advancing troops in both the Davao and Mintal areas and in support of hostile counterattacks, but were effectively neutralized by close coordination between artillery counterbattery fires and close air support. The Japanese attempt to regain his lost strategic positions had failed.

On 3 May, the 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, moved north from Davao along the east bank of the Davao River against stiff resistance and captured the commanding ground in the vicinity of the reservoir, overlooking Davao City. Concurrently, the 3d Battalion moved rapidly east through the City in house to house fighting against almost constant sniper and mortar fire, and enemy boobytraps. By late afternoon, the same day, Davao City was secure.

The capture of the City climaxed a drive of 145 miles in 15 days.

The last major city held by the Japanese in the Philippines had fallen.





TWIN 25mm JAP ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS SET IN CON-
CRETE EMPLACEMENT ON BEACH SOUTH OF DAVAO.
THE GUNS WERE SIGHTED SEAWARD AS INSURANCE
AGAINST THE EXPECTED AMERICAN AMPHIBIOUS AS-
SAULT WHICH NEVER CAME. THIS POSITION WAS
TAKEN FROM THE REAR BY THE 24th DIVISION.



FILIPINO BOYS POSE BY A 5" JAP GUN CAPTURED
BY THE 24th DIVISION NEAR DAVAO CITY.

CHAPTER 4

THE SAYRE HIGHWAY

Following the successful advance to Kabakan, and concurrently with the 24th Infantry Division drive towards Davao Gulf, the 31st Infantry Division was directed to initiate movement to the north on Sayre Highway. The initial objective was the seizure of the junction of the Kibawe-Talomo Trail, 49 miles to the north.

On 25 April, the 124th Regimental Combat Team moved from Cotabato, and by afternoon of 27 April had closed into an assembly area 2,000 yards north of Kabakan. That same evening at 1800, with the 2d Battalion leading, the advance to the north began.

The regiment moved ten miles the first night to the vicinity of Aroman, where elements of the 1st Battalion of the Japanese 74th Regiment were encountered. A sharp fight developed and continued until 0500, when the enemy force broke contact and fled. A field order captured during the engagement indicated that this enemy force had been moving towards Kabakan with the mission of recapturing an ammunition dump in the vicinity of the ferry crossing near Kabakan.

A short distance north of Aroman, the regiment encountered two deep gorges, both with bridges blown, which added greatly to the difficulty of the advance. Steep sides and rugged surrounding terrain precluded the possibility of by-passes. Cable crossings were erected which were capable of moving light vehicles across the gorges. A battery of 105mm howitzers was crossed in this manner, and jeep-drawn, continued north in support of the infantry.

Despite these obstacles, the drive continued against persistent enemy delaying actions, and by 1400 on 1 May, a bridgehead across the Mulita River at Omanay had been established.

SECRET



SWEEPING CURVES AND RUGGED SURROUNDING TERRAIN WERE AMONG THE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED ALONG SAYRE HIGHWAY.



VALENCIA AREA AS SEEN FROM THE AIR.

SECRET

On 2 May, the 1st Battalion moved through the 2d and 3d Battalions to take the lead, and continued advancing until 2200 when the outskirts of Kibawe were reached. At 0830 on 3 May, the town was captured, and the Kibawe-Talomo Trail was blocked, completing the isolation of the two principal enemy forces on the island. The following day, the regiment resumed the advance, and encountered heavy resistance at the south end of Pinalay-USA Lake from a force of 400-500 Japs in well prepared positions astride the highway.

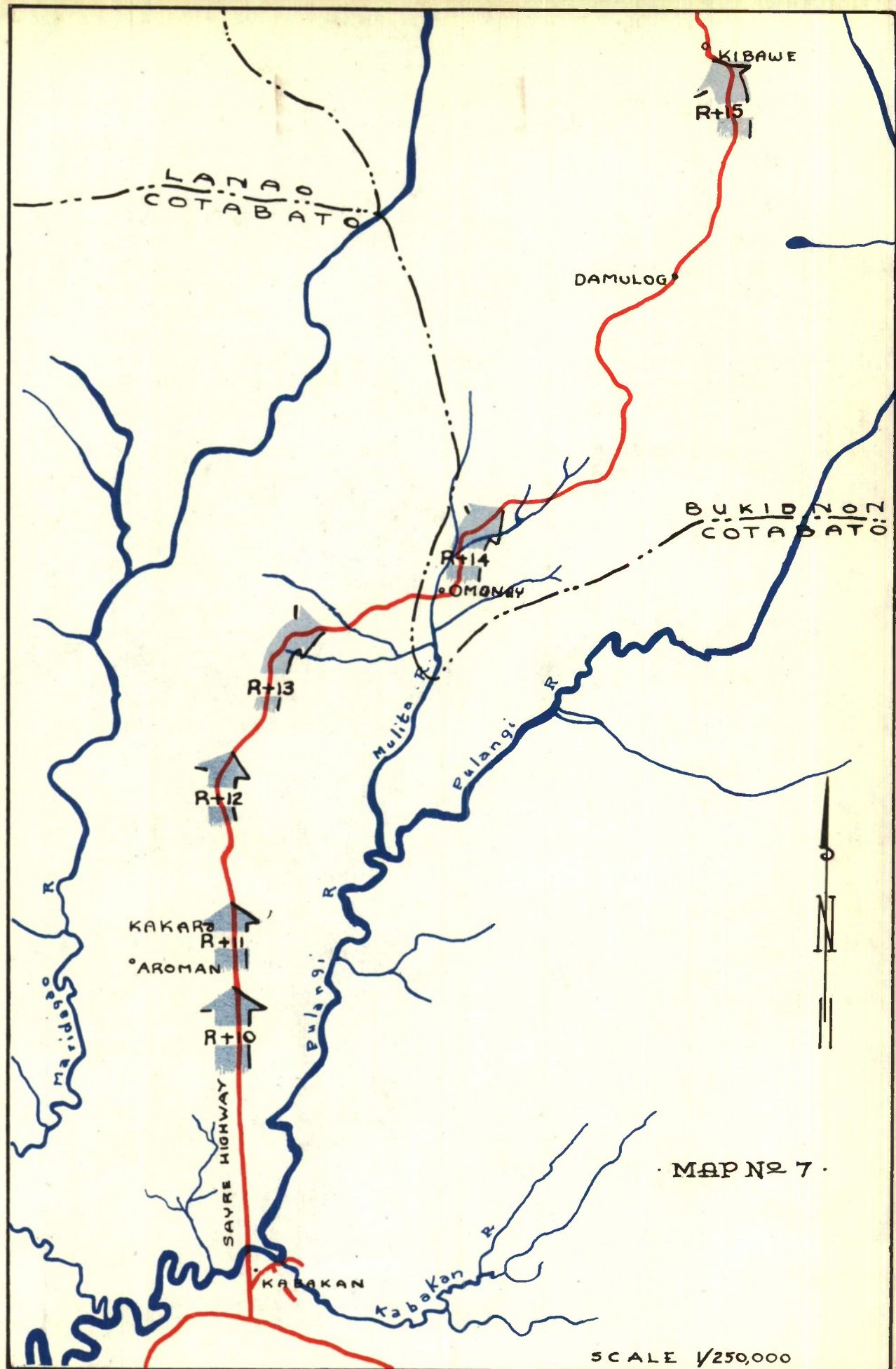
For five days the enemy fought furiously, contesting every inch of ground in an effort to delay the advance. Apparently, their mission was to delay sufficiently to permit the major portion of the 30th Division to move to the Maluko and Malaybalay areas, and thence east on the Silae and Cabanglasan Trails.

The 1st Battalion, 124th Infantry, pocketed the enemy force which permitted the 3d Battalion to sweep around the resistance and secure Maramag Airstrip #1, on 7 May. The 1st Battalion continued to reduce the enemy pocket and resistance was completely broken on the fifth day. Counted enemy dead totalled 350.

Upon arrival at Parang, on 4 May, the 162d Regimental Combat Team (41st Infantry Division) was assigned the security of the Parang Beachhead and lines of communication to the east, permitting the remainder of the 31st Infantry Division to move towards Kibawe.

Arriving at Kibawe, the 167th Infantry relieved elements of the 124th Infantry blocking the trail junction. One battalion was dispatched down the Kibawe-Talomo Trail, while the 155th Infantry continued movement to the north. On 13 May, the 155th Infantry passed through the 124th Infantry at Maramag Airstrip #1 and continued the drive to the north.

Just before dawn on 15 May, the 2d Battalion, 124th Infantry, received a banzai attack by 100-200 Japs in the vicinity of Maramag Airstrip #1 which was repulsed after 72 Japanese had been killed. The defeat broke the enemy's



SECRET



WOUNDED MEMBERS OF THE 124th INFANTRY BEING
EVACUATED FROM A PORTABLE SURGICAL HOSPITAL
TO A SMALL AIRFIELD FOR EVACUATION BY AIR.



A STEP CLOSER TO EVACUATION BY AIR.

SECRET



JAPS KILLED BY 31st DIVISION INFANTRYMEN WHEN THEIR BANZAI ATTACK WAS REPULSED AT MARAMAG AIRSTRIP.



JAP EQUIPMENT CAPTURED AFTER THE ATTACK INCLUDES AN AMERICAN 30 Cal. MACHINE GUN (foreground).

attempt to halt the advance. This was the last major action on the Sayre Highway drive.

From that point, the greatest deterrents to our advance were torrential rains. They reduced roads to impassable quagmires, that together with blown bridges and swollen streams, made progress extremely difficult.

The 155th Infantry resumed the advance and by 16 May had secured Valencia, and the following day, Valencia Airfield. Mailag was seized on 18 May, and the drive towards Malaybalay, the Capital of Bukidnon Province, was begun.

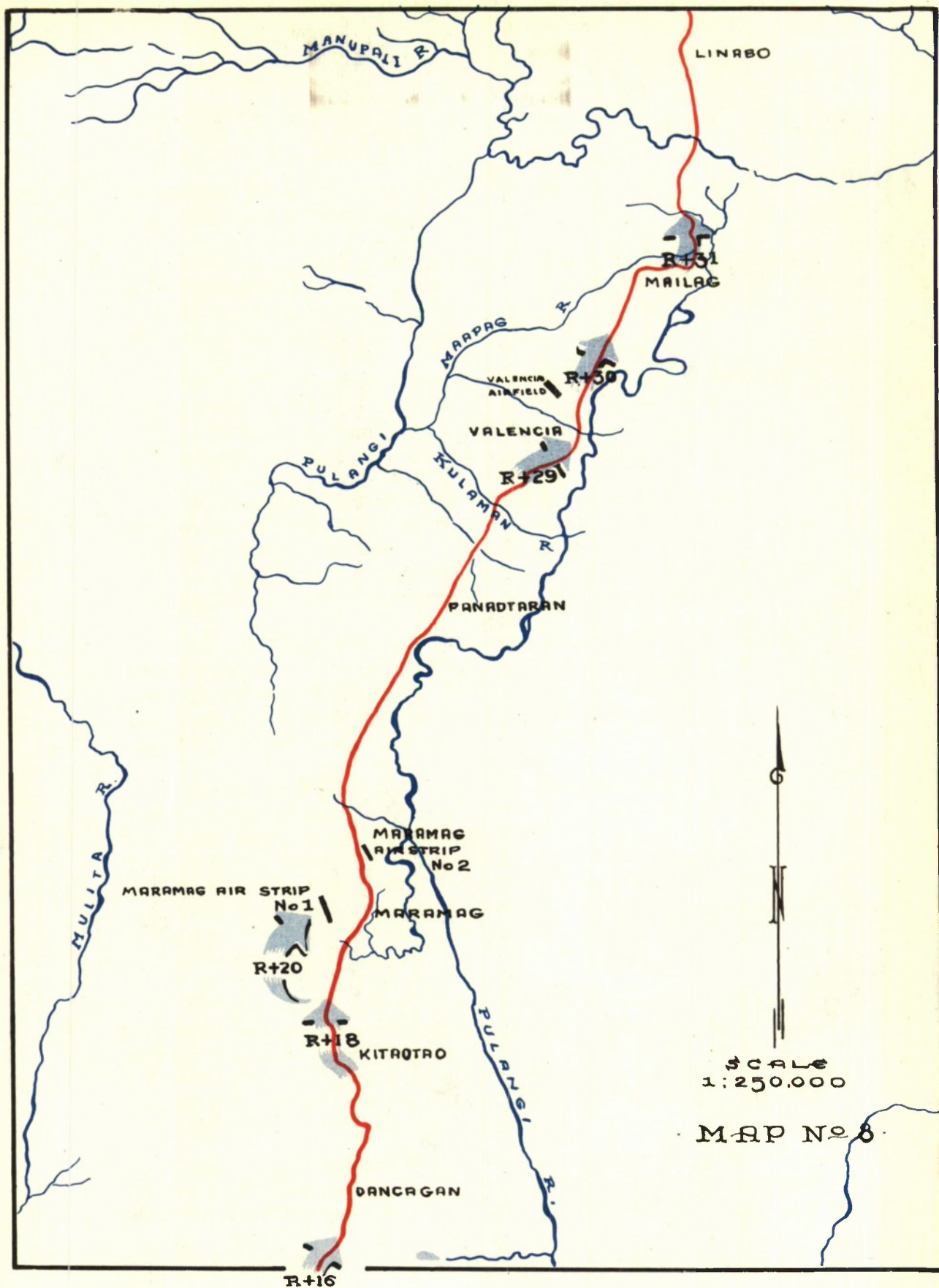
On 20 May, after leading elements of the regiment had passed the Linabo Road Junction, enemy artillery fire began falling intermittently. The advance continued, but by the time the leading elements reached a point 5,000 yards south of Malaybalay, the fire had become intense and accurate.

The 3d Battalion moved to the east and the 1st and 2d Battalions to the west, both forces reconnoitering for covered routes of approach to Malaybalay. Throughout the night of 20-21 May, Japanese artillery fire covered the highway and adjacent areas.

On the morning of 21 May, the regiment moved along covered routes on both sides of the Highway, travelling ten miles to cover an airline distance of 5,000 yards, and Malaybalay Airstrip and Malaybalay town were seized at 1600. The 3d Battalion moved north from Malaybalay and captured the town of Sumpong thereby blocking a principal east-west trail, while the 1st and 2d Battalions moved northwest on the Highway.

By the evening of 22 May, leading elements of the Regiment had reached Dalwangan, meeting only scattered opposition. The following morning the Regiment resumed the advance, and at 1410, a juncture was effected with the 108th Regimental Combat Team which had made a landing at Bugo on May under control of Eighth Army.

The entire Sayre Highway was then under our control, leaving the enemy only mountain tracks for his disorganized retreat to the mountainous region east of the highway.





CONSTRUCTION OF BAILEY BRIDGE BY 31st DIVISION ENGINEERS AT MALAYBALAY.



AERIAL VIEW SHOWS ONE OF MANY DEEP GORGES WHICH THE 31st DIVISION ENCOUNTERED ALONG THE SAYRE HIGHWAY.



PARTIALLY COMPLETED BAILEY BRIDGE IS ABOUT TO BE PUSHED INTO ITS SEAT ACROSS THE RIVER NEAR VALENCIA.



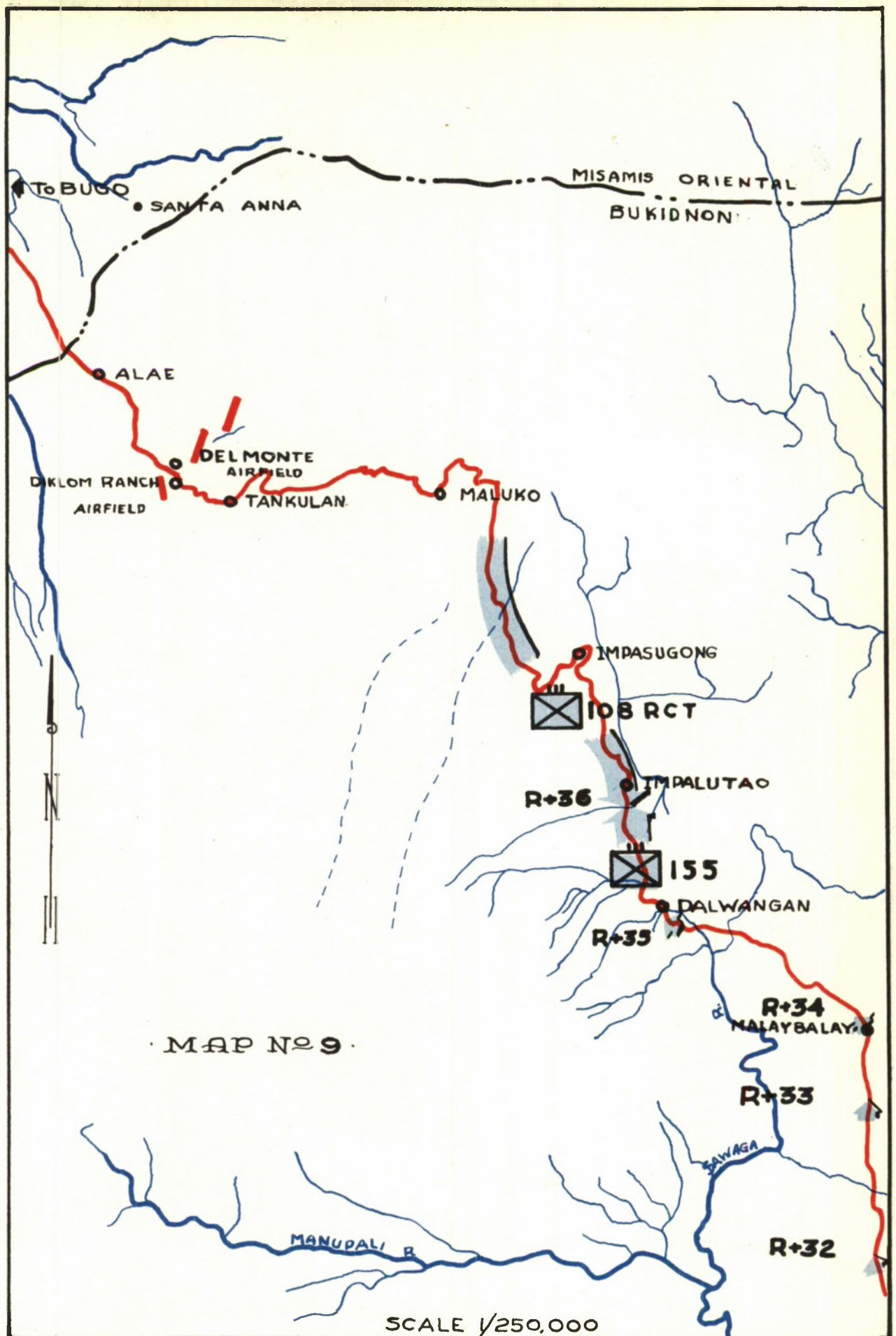
THE SAME BRIDGE BEING LOWERED INTO POSITION ON OPPOSITE BANK.



OLD WOODEN BRIDGE DESTROYED BY RETREATING JAPS IS SHOWN FRAMED UNDERNEATH NEW BAILEY BRIDGE.



HEAVE - HO.... AND ANOTHER BAILEY BRIDGE IS PUSHED ACROSS A STREAM.



SECRET



TWO PARACHUTES CARRY AMMUNITION DOWN FROM A C-47 TO MEN OF THE 31st DIVISION ON THE SAYRE HIGHWAY.



AERIAL VIEW OF MARAMAG AIRSTRIP #1

SECRET



ENGINEERS REMOVING IMPROVISED JAP MINES ALONG THE SAYRE HIGHWAY. MINES WERE MADE OF JAP 90mm SHELLS SUNK IN THE ROAD WITH THE FUSE JUST BELOW GROUND LEVEL.



LT. GEN ROBERT L. EICHELBERGER, CG OF EIGHTH ARMY AND MAJOR GEN F. C. SIBERT, CG OF THE X CORPS, EXAMINE JAP EQUIPMENT CAPTURED BY THE 124th INFANTRY..

The following photographs show road conditions encountered by troops advancing north on Sayre Highway between the Mulita River and Kibawe. Kilometer markers show distances south from Malaybalay.



WATER RUNNING DOWN ROAD BETWEEN KM-81.0 - 82.0.



KM-82.8 SHOWING CORAL AND ROAD CONDITION. CORAL NOT SUITABLE FOR ROAD METAL.



NOTE TIMBER GROWTH AND ROAD KM-83.5.



KM-83.6 CORAL PIT SUITABLE FOR ROAD METAL.



GENERAL ROAD CONDITION FROM KM-84.5 - 88.0.



GENERAL ROAD CONDITION FROM KM-90.0 - 92.0.



H-20 BRIDGE KM-92.9.



CORAL DEPOSITE SUITABLE FOR ROAD METAL



ROAD TO BE RELOCATED FROM KM-97.0 - 98.0.



ROAD CONDITION AT KM-100.0.



ROAD GOING DOWN HILL TO MULITA RIVER BRIDGE KM-102.0.



GENERAL ROAD CONDITION FROM KM-103 - 104.

CHAPTER 5

FINAL PHASES

With the Sayre Highway open and Davao liberated, strategically the campaign was ended. The less spectacular but more difficult task began; that of ousting the Jap from the mountainous regions to which he had fled.

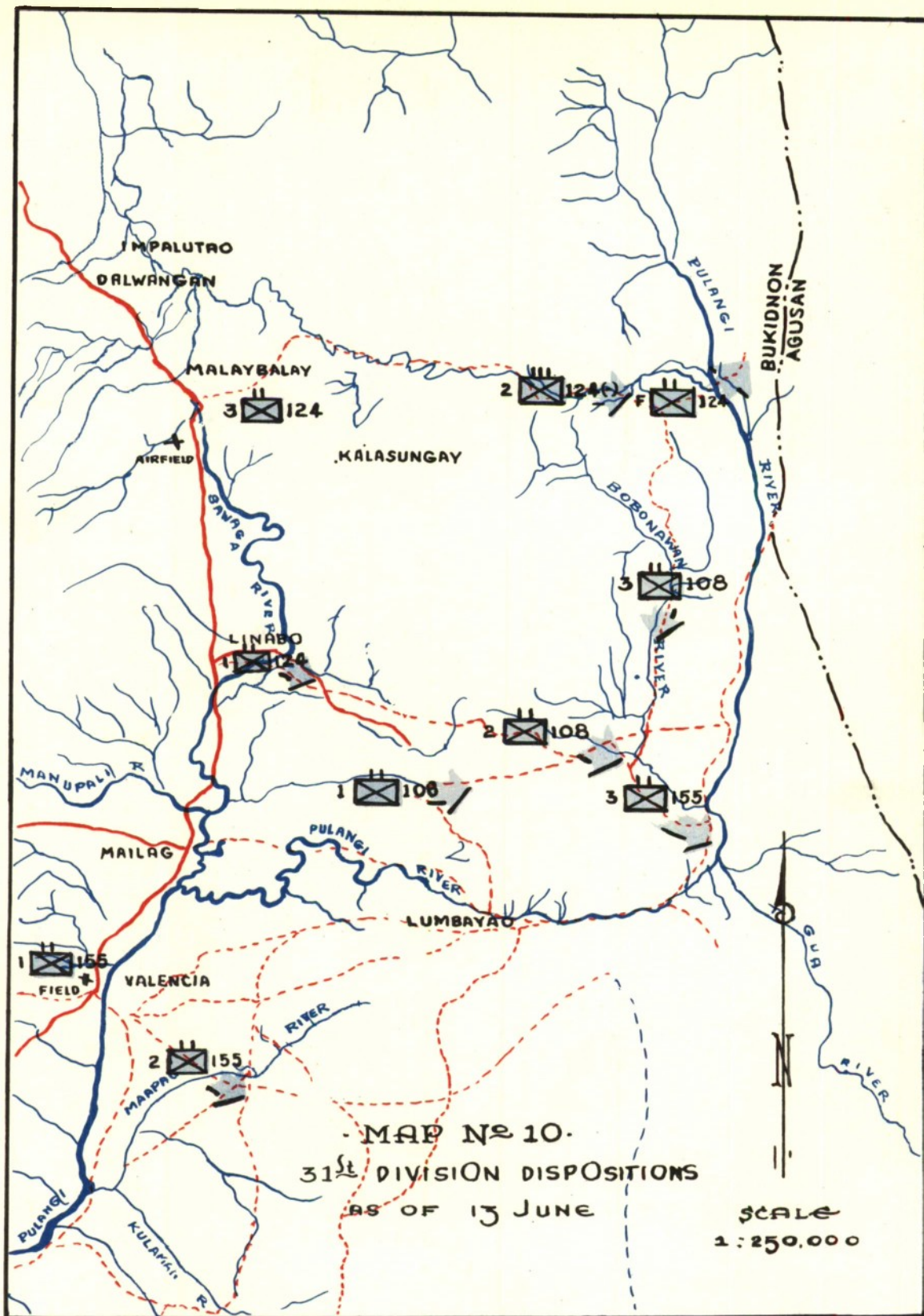
The 31st Infantry Division, following its juncture with the 108th Regimental Combat Team on 23 May, patrolled extensively to the east and west of the Sayre Highway to clear those areas of enemy stragglers. The 124th Infantry and the 108th Regimental Combat Team, which came under the control of X Corps on 25 May, drove east from Malaybalay and Linabo while elements of the 155th Infantry and the 2d Battalion, 162d Infantry, crossed the Pulangi River in the vicinity of Valencia and advanced to the east.

Bitter enemy resistance was encountered in the hills east of the Sayre Highway which, together with the rugged terrain, made advances slow and difficult. The town of Silao was occupied by the 2d Battalion, 124th Infantry, on 9 June, and strong patrols were dispatched east to the Pulangi River.

The 3d Battalion, 108th Infantry, followed the 2d Battalion, 124th Infantry, into Silao, then moved south and captured the town of Cabanglasan on 12 June.

The 3d Battalion, 155th Infantry, seized the town of Lumbayo on 3 June and continued movement to the east reaching the junction of the Pulangi and Tigua Rivers on 12 June. The area west of the Pulangi River had been cleared and the balance of the enemy force driven into the mountains east of the river.

Meanwhile, the 167th Infantry, since its arrival in the



Kibawe area on 9 May, had been driving to the southeast on the Kibawe-Talomo Trail in pursuit of the retreating enemy forces cut off by our advance north on the Sayre Highway.

Resistance encountered along the trail was negligible initially, but as the regiment neared the Pulangi River it stiffened, and the advance from that point to Pinamola was against as strong resistance as was met on the Island. Enemy resistance, however, was not the only difficulty encountered. The terrain over which the regiment advanced was extremely rugged, and escarpments on both sides of the trail made flanking movements difficult.

The regiment captured the town of Sanipon, ten miles southeast of Kibawe, on 30 May and forced a bridgehead across the Pulangi River. As the regiment advanced towards Pinamola, the terrain became increasingly difficult, and enemy resistance more determined. The enemy made a final stand on a hill position northwest of Pinamola, but this resistance was broken on 28 June and on 30 June Pinamola was captured.

To destroy enemy forces moving south from Surigao Province, and to block the remnants of the Japanese 30th Division from entering the Agusan River Valley, the Commanding General, X Corps, ordered a force of not to exceed one reinforced battalion to move overwater to Butuan Bay and south on the Agusan River to the Waloe area.

The 1st Battalion, reinforced, 155th Infantry, embarked at Bugo on 24 June, and on 27 June, established a base of operations at Sagunto in the Agusan River Valley. By 30 June, the towns of Waloe and Halapitan had been captured and patrols were active throughout the area making only minor contacts. Speed of maneuver and perfect timing had again surprised the enemy, and in another area, he was forced to the mountains and broken as an effective fighting force.

In the 24th Infantry Division sector, Japanese resistance intensified throughout the hills to the north and northwest of Davao City. The Mintal area was defended by the 352d and 353d Independent Infantry Battalions, while the

32d Special Naval Base Force defended the Matina-Davao River area, and the reservoir hill area east of the Davao River.

The 2d Battalion, 21st Infantry, and the 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, continued compressing enemy forces in the Libby Airdrome area, and by 1200 on 4 May, had neutralized that resistance, established road blocks, and secured the commanding terrain in the vicinity of the airdrome.

Meanwhile, the 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry, was relieved on the line of communication by the Expeditionary Battalion, 108th Division (Fil), and moved to join the balance of the regiment. Arriving at the Talomo-Mintal road just southeast of Libby Airdrome on 4 May, the battalion encountered several enemy positions and the fight for the Talomo-Mintal Road was underway.

The following morning, this Battalion engaged the Jap force frontally while the 2d Battalion, 21st Infantry, moved north and attacked the flank. For three days the two battalions fought furiously, over ground literally covered with enemy positions, before resistance on the road to Mintal was broken. Field artillery and planes supporting the attack, pounded the hills north of the road to destroy Japanese guns which had been delivering long-range fire.

Simultaneously with the drive up the Talomo-Mintal Road, the 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, attached to the 21st Infantry, attacked enemy positions along the northeast bank of the Talomo River from Bancal.

When the 2d Battalion, 21st Infantry, moved into Mintal and took over security of the town on 8 May, the 1st Battalion moved to the vicinity of Bancal to support the 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry.

For several days the two battalions pressed a coordinated attack to the northwest, advancing slowly but steadily until all Jap resistance was broken and the high ground to the northeast of the Talomo River was secured.

The 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, departed from Digos in

SECRET



SUDDEN DEATH MIGHT HAVE COME TO THE MAN WHO REACHED FOR ONE OF THESE "SOUVENIR" JAPANESE RIFLES. A 24th DIVISION INFANTRYMAN IS SHOWN POINTING TO NEAR INVISIBLE BLACK WIRE LEADING TO THE BOOBY TRAP.



A 4.2" CHEMICAL MORTAR ABOUT TO BE FIRED.

SECRET

pursuit of the retreating forces of the "Digos Sector Command". Contact was established in the Guma area, and the enemy force broken. Disorganized remnants retreated to the Mt. Apo area, abandoning the bulk of their weapons and supplies.

Following the clearing of the Guma area, the 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, returned to Digos and, on 12 May, was relieved of the security of the Digos area by the 3d Battalion, 162d Infantry. The 2d and 3d Battalions, 34th Infantry, then moved to the Talomo area and joined the 1st Battalion, concentrating the regiment in the hills northeast of the Talomo River.

For a period of two weeks after the capture of Davao, the 19th Infantry mopped up the area and the hills to the north and west thereof. The 3d Battalion landed on Samal Island in Davao Gulf and destroyed enemy forces thereon. Several large enemy guns, which had been harassing the Davao area, were captured and destroyed.

The 3d Battalion, 163d Infantry (41st Infantry Division), landed in the Davao area on 15 May, and relieved elements of the 19th Infantry securing Davao City.

On 17 May, the 19th Infantry began movement from Davao northeast on Highway #1 toward Ising to effect a juncture with guerrilla forces operating in that area.

The distance of 24 miles to Ising was covered in seven days against scattered enemy delaying actions and a profusion of mines and aerial bombs emplaced as land mines. The movement was supported by Naval craft, and vehicles were transported around destroyed bridges by LCMs. Upon reaching Ising, the Regiment patrolled northwest to the Davao Penal Colony and north to the Tagum River where contact was established with elements of the 130th Infantry, 107th Division (Filipino).

On 17 May, the X Corps Artillery Command Post opened at Talomo, and Corps Artillery units reverted to the control of the Commanding General, X Corps Artillery.

On 19 May, the 181st Field Artillery (155 How) Battalion and the 655th Field Artillery (8" How) Battalion went into position in the vicinity of Libby Airdrome, concentrating the Corps Artillery, (less Battery C, 983d Field Artillery (155mm Gun) Battalion, supporting the 31st Infantry Division), in that area. Throughout the balance of the campaign, the Corps Artillery fired in support of the operations of the 24th Infantry Division. In addition to close support missions supplementing the fires of the 24th Division Artillery, normal harassing and interdiction fires were placed on enemy rear areas. The constant destruction of vehicles, supply dumps, and warehouses, as well as restricting enemy movement and hitting troop concentrations and bivouac areas, contributed materially to the success of this phase of the campaign.

Meanwhile, elements of the 21st Infantry in Mintal patrolled the area extensively, destroying enemy remnants encountered. After careful reconnaissance, the regiment drove on Tugbok, which was entered on 18 May.

The enemy counterattacked heavily, and the Tugbok area was not completely secured until 22 May. On 23 May, the drive turned east, and after a bridgehead was established across the Talomo River at Mintal, the Regiment pushed east and sealed the escape route of the enemy forces retreating before the drive of the 34th Infantry.

Following its juncture with Guerrilla forces at Ising, the 19th Infantry assembled in the Bunawan-Pagamikan area and moved into the hills west of Highway #1 to clear the area northeast of the Davao River. The 1st Battalion remained in the vicinity of Pagamikan in reserve. When the 2d and 3d Battalions reached the Mandog area, they encountered strong resistance from elements of the 1st and 2d Naval Battalions.

While the 2d and 3d Battalions continued to compress the enemy force frontally, the 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, moved to the west from Pagamikan to the road junction north of Cabaquio, turned north, and enveloped the enemy's south flank. This maneuver completely disorganized the hostile force, and the Regiment methodically reduced remaining isolated pockets.

SECRET



A SKYTRAIN DROPS SUPPLIES TO ADVANCING TROOPS.



CASUALTIES INSIDE OF C-47 JUST BEFORE TAKE-OFF.

SECRET

By 29 May, all resistance in the Matina Valley and the hills northeast of the Talomo River had been broken. The Division reassembled for further offensive action to the west and northwest.

Elements of the 34th Infantry relieved the 21st Infantry in the Mintal-Tugbok area, and the 21st Infantry assembled in the vicinity of Bato and Labogan in preparation for clearing the area southwest of Mintal. The Regiment fanned out through the area mopping up small enemy groups. On 30 May, Bayabas was captured and in rapid succession the towns of Mulig, Alambre, and Tankelan fell.

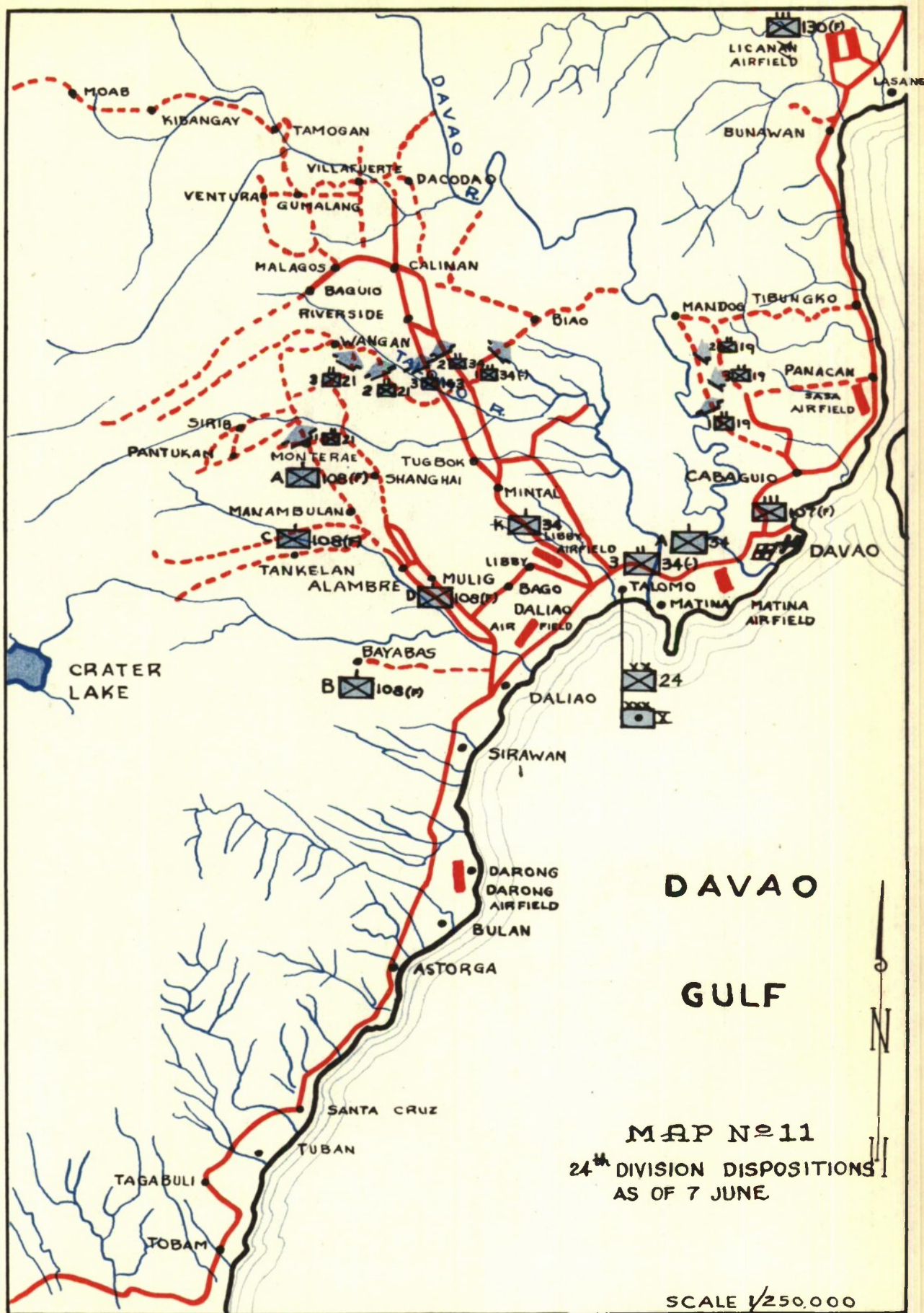
Company G, 21st Infantry, moved north and west from Alambre on 1 June, and seized Manambulan, while Companies E and F pushed north and took Shanghai. The following morning the towns of Naming and Monterae were captured by the 2d Battalion.

The 2d Battalion, 34th Infantry, drove north from Mintal, and after breaking strong resistance, captured Ula on 3 June. The 3d Battalion, supported the drive on Ula by its advance north on the parallel Tugbok-Calinan Road, and by mopping up the area between the roads.

The 1st Battalion, 21st Infantry, moved by truck from Alambre to Monterae on 4 June, and from that point, drove north to seize Tagakpan.

The 3d Battalion, 163d Infantry, was attached to the 34th Infantry, and prepared to spearhead the drive towards Calinan.

To clear the entrances of Davao Gulf and destroy reported enemy coast watcher stations on the southeastern section of the Island, Company K, 162d Infantry, reinforced, embarked at Digos and made landings at Luayon, Balut Island, and Cape San Agustin on 3, 4, and 5 June. Resistance at each point was light and the enemy detachments were scattered to the hills. The Company found and destroyed seven radio sets, two generators, two 20mm guns, gas dumps, and considerable supplies.



Following a short period of consolidating and mopping up in recently captured areas, the 21st Infantry pressed its attack to the north, and on 9 June, seized Wangan.

The 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, moved from the vicinity of Ula to Mintal on 8 June, and that night advanced to the northeast and captured Biao. The rapidity of this move completely surprised the enemy, and a Jap force, withdrawing from Wangan in the face of the 21st Infantry attack, was ambushed and destroyed as it withdrew into Biao.

Meanwhile, the 3d Battalion, 163d Infantry, continued the advance to the northwest on the Kibawe-Talomo Trail and on 10 June, captured Riverside.

On 9 June, the 162d Infantry moved to an assembly area in the vicinity of Bago, prepared to relieve the 34th Infantry. The relief was completed by 13 June, and the 3d Battalion, 163d Infantry, mopping up in the Riverside area, was attached to the 162d Infantry.

A coordinated attack on Calinan by the 162d Infantry, from Riverside, and the 21st Infantry, with the 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, attached, from Wangan, began on 14 June. The two regiments advanced steadily against stubborn enemy resistance, and on the morning of 18 June, the 3d Battalion, 163d Infantry, entered Calinan.

Following the capture of Calinan, the 34th Infantry relieved the 21st Infantry and, on 19 June, drove west and captured Malagos. Simultaneously, the 162d Infantry drove north from Calinan and secured the Lascon Plantation area.

On 21 June, the 1st Battalion, 34th Infantry, drove northwest from Malagos and seized Gumalang, while the 3d Battalion moved southwest and captured Baguio. Company G moved across country and occupied Ventura the same day. The enemy had become disorganized and was fleeing to the hills.

Meanwhile, the 19th Infantry moved to the Calinan area to join the 34th and the 162d Infantries in the con-

tinuation of the offensive to the northwest. On 21 June, the 2d Battalion, 19th Infantry, moved north and captured Villafuerte, then turned to the west toward Gumalang mopping up north to the Davao River. The same day-elements of the 3d Battalion seized Dacodao, and cleared enemy remnants trapped between Dacodao and the Davao River.

The 19th and 34th Infantries launched a coordinated attack on Tamogan, and on 24 June, the 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, entered the town. The attack pushed on towards Kibangay, while the 2d Battalion, 34th Infantry, drove to the southwest and occupied Unapan.

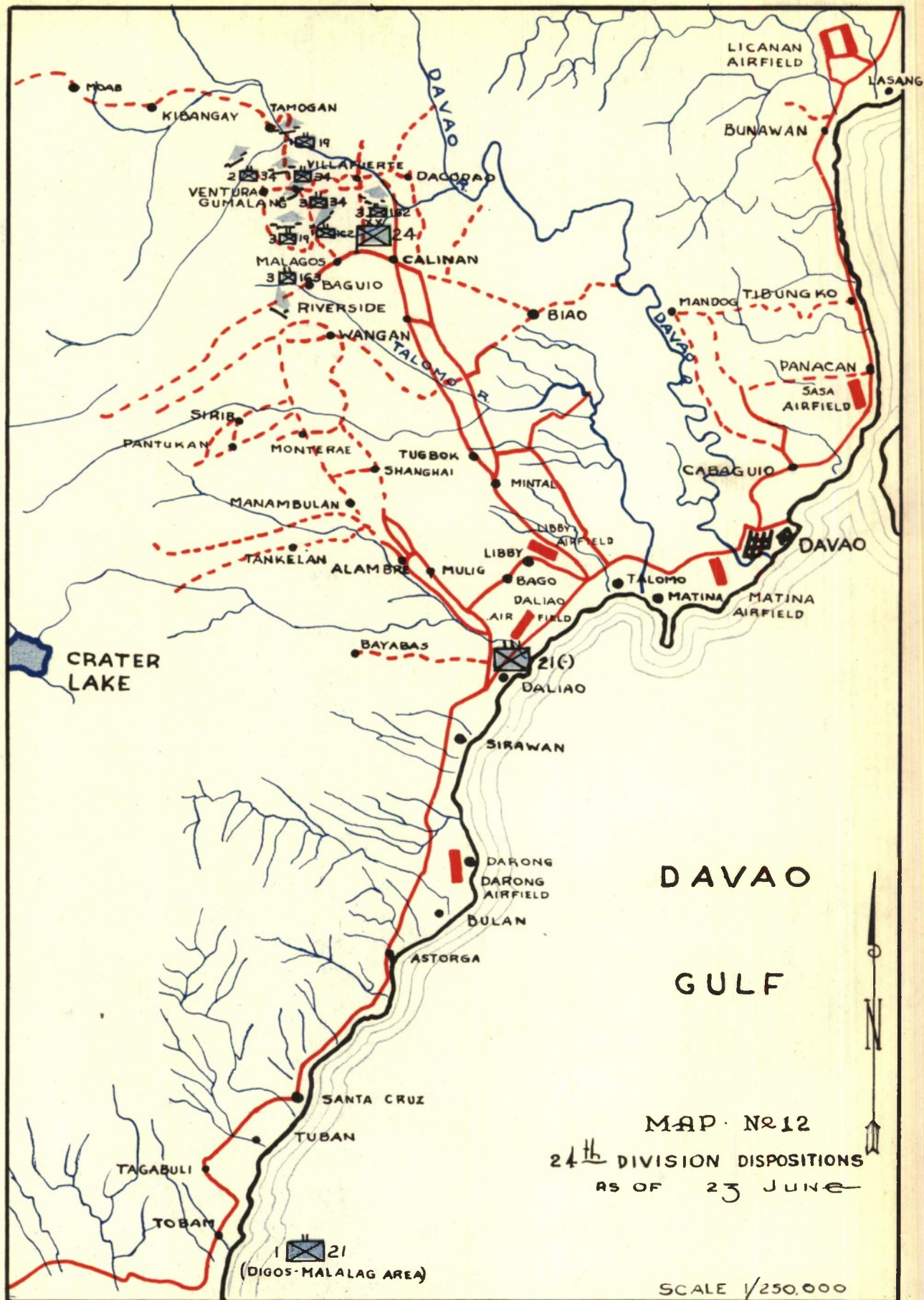
Kibangay was captured on 26 June by the 3d Battalion, 34th Infantry, while the 3d Battalion, 19th Infantry, protected its right flank. The balance of the 19th Infantry mopped up enemy positions north of Tamogan to the Davao River.

Following the capture of Kibangay, the advance was pushed west another 1,500 yards. At this point, the road was virtually impassable and showed no sign of recent enemy use.

By 30 June, organized enemy resistance was completely broken.

On 1 July, Lieutenant General Robert L. Eichelberger, Commanding General, Eighth Army, dispatched the following message to Major General Franklin C. Sibert, Commanding General, X Corps:

"Please extend to the officers and men of your command my heartiest congratulations on the successful completion of the mission assigned for Victor Five. Despite difficult terrain, bad weather, the campaign progressed at a rapid rate and the officers and men by their vigorous prosecution of combat were able to rapidly disintegrate one of the largest forces remaining in the Philippines. A good job well done."



PART III

ANNEXES

. ANNEX 1

X CORPS (REINFORCED)

INITIAL COMBAT UNITS

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>STAGING
AREA</u> | <u>PERS</u> | <u>VEH</u> | <u>DATE OF
ATTCHMT</u> |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------|----------------------------|
| Hq & Hq Co, X Corps | LEYTE | 517 | 118 | |
| 24th Inf Div, (See Troop
List 1-A) | MINDORO | 19,107 | 3,154 | 20 March |
| 31st Inf Div, (See Troop
List 1-B) | MOROTAI | 14,232 | 2,507 | 20 March |
| Hq & Hq Btry, X Corps Arty | LEYTE | 117 | 42 | 6 April |
| 181st FA (155 How) Bn | MINDORO | 531 | 127 | 6 April |
| 983d FA (155 Gun) Bn | MINDORO | 533 | 115 | 6 April |
| 655th FA (8" How) Bn | LEYTE | 581 | 115 | 20 March |
| Hq & Hq Btry, 116th AAA Gp | MINDORO | 70 | 15 | 6 April |
| 383d AAA AW Bn | MOROTAI | 725 | 116 | 1 April |
| 487th AAA AW Bn | MINDORO | 725 | 116 | 6 April |
| 496th AAA Gun Bn | SANSAPOR | 787 | 81 | 1 April |
| Btry B, 166th AAA Gun Bn | MINDORO | 180 | 20 | 20 March |
| Btry B, 222d AAA S/L Bn | MINDORO | 230 | 58 | 1 April |
| 3 S/L Secs, 1st Plat, | | | | |
| Btry B, 237th AAA S/L Bn | MINDORO | 48 | 7 | 20 March |
| 143d AAA Opns Det | FINSCHHAFEN | 42 | 13 | 1 April |
| 506th Engr LP Co | MINDORO | 221 | 103 | 4 April |
| TOTALS | | 38,646 | 6,707 | |

INITIAL SERVICE UNITS

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|-------|-----|----------|
| 24th Inf Div (See Troop
List 1-A) | MINDORO | 2,319 | 312 | 20 March |
| 31st Inf Div (See Troop
List 1-B) | MOROTAI | 770 | 113 | 20 March |

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>STAGING
AREA</u> | <u>PERS</u> | <u>VEH</u> | <u>DATE OF
ATCHMT</u> |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------|---------------------------|
| Hq & Hq Co, 932d Engr Cons Gp | MINDORO | 109 | 15 | 20 March |
| 1874th Engr Avn Bn | MINDORO | 777 | 241 | 20 March |
| 240th Engr Cons Bn | MINDORO | 966 | 215 | 20 March |
| 570th Engr Dump Trk Co | MOROTAI | 107 | 56 | 20 March |
| 490th Engr Base Equip Co | HOLLANDIA | 173 | 130 | 1 April |
| 477th Engr Maint Co (-2
Plats) | LEYTE | 91 | 28 | 1 April |
| Det, 783d Engr Pet Dist Co | MINDORO | 69 | 10 | 20 March |
| 441st Engr Dep Co (-2
Plats) | MOROTAI | 81 | 8 | 20 March |
| 1 Plat, 441st Engr Dep Co | LEYTE | 33 | 7 | 1 April |
| Surv Plat, 67th Engr Topo
Co | LEYTE | 34 | 8 | 20 March |
| 96th Engr Gen Serv Regt | SANSAPOR | 1,240 | 263 | 20 March |
| Det, 2773d Engr Base
Reprod Co | LEYTE | 12 | 8 | 1 April |
| 172d Sta Hosp (500 bed) | SANSAPOR | 353 | 13 | 20 March |
| 361st Sta Hosp (500 bed) | BIAK | 353 | 13 | 20 March |
| 52d Field Hosp (-1st Hosp
Unit) | MINDORO | 180 | 17 | 6 April |
| 90th Field Hosp (400 bed) | LEYTE | 230 | 22 | 1 April |
| 74th Med Dep Co | FINSCHAFEN | 44 | 3 | 1 April |
| Co A, 263d Med Bn (ESB) | MINDORO | 105 | 8 | 4 April |
| 1 Plat, 982d Med Amb Co | HOLLANDIA | 23 | 11 | 1 April |
| Adv Sec, 3d Med Lab | LEYTE | 17 | 2 | 20 March |
| 4th Mal Cont Unit | LEYTE | 12 | 3 | 1 April |
| 4 Surg Teams | LEYTE | 32 | 0 | 27 March |
| Hq & Hq Det, 194th Ord Bn | MOROTAI | 35 | 6 | 20 March |
| 108th Ord MM Co | LEYTE | 169 | 45 | 1 April |
| 291st Ord MM Co | MOROTAI | 169 | 45 | 20 March |
| 509th Ord HM Co (FA) | LEYTE | 198 | 33 | 1 April |
| 642d Ord Am Co | HOLLANDIA | 186 | 16 | 1 April |
| 310th Ord Dep Co (-Det) | MILNE BAY | 136 | 18 | 1 April |
| Det, 3608th Ord HM Co | ZAMBOANGA | 10 | 0 | 20 April |
| Det, 310th Ord Dep Co | MINDORO | 42 | 4 | 22 April |
| Team #6, 3073d Ord Comp Co | LEYTE | 12 | 3 | 17 April |
| Team #8, 3073d Ord Comp Co | LEYTE | 12 | 3 | 17 April |
| 99th Sig Bn (-Cos A & C) | LEYTE | 380 | 85 | 17 April |
| Co A, 98th Sig Bn | LEYTE | 201 | 83 | 20 March |
| 93d Sig Radar Maint Unit
(Type A) | SANSAPOR | 5 | 2 | 23 April |

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>STAGING
AREA</u> | <u>PERS</u> | <u>VEH</u> | <u>DATE OF
ATCHMT</u> |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------|---------------------------|
| 298th Sig Radar Maint
Unit (Type C) | SANSAPOR | 5 | 2 | 23 April |
| 2d Stor & Issue Sec,
3169th Sig Serv Bn | MINDORO | 23 | 3 | 20 March |
| 26th Radio Link Repeater
Team, 3169th Sig Serv Bn | LEYTE | 6 | 0 | 20 March |
| 27th Radio Link Repeater
Team, 3169th Sig Serv Bn | LEYTE | 6 | 0 | 20 March |
| 3d Radio Repair Sec, 176th
Sig Repair Co | MOROTAI | 11 | 1 | 23 April |
| 20th Radio Carrier Term
Team, 3169th Sig Serv Bn | LEYTE | 26 | 4 | 20 March |
| 2d Radio Sta Team, 832d
Sig Serv Bn | LEYTE | 6 | 1 | 20 March |
| 2d Msg Cen Team, 832d
Sig Serv Bn | MOROTAI | 13 | 1 | 20 March |
| 15th Radio Sta Team, 832d
Sig Serv Bn | MOROTAI | 6 | 1 | 23 April |
| 15th Msg Cen Team, 832d
Sig Serv Bn | MOROTAI | 13 | 1 | 23 April |
| Det, 125th Sig Radio
Intel Co | LEYTE | 23 | 3 | 17 April |
| Hq & Hq Det, 531st QM Bn | MILNE BAY | 29 | 6 | 1 April |
| 3746th QM Trk Co (w/atchd
3342d QM Serv Det) | MILNE BAY | 134 | 104 | 1 April |
| 3752d QM Trk Co (w/atchd
3335th QM Serv Det) | MINDORO | 134 | 104 | 23 April |
| 3770th QM Trk Co (w/atchd
3347th QM Serv Det) | MINDORO | 134 | 104 | 26 April |
| 849th QM Gas Sup Co | HOLLANDIA | 128 | 23 | 1 April |
| 2d Plat, 572d QM Rhd Co | HOLLANDIA | 75 | 0 | 5 May |
| 1st Plat, 234th QM
Salv Col Co | LEYTE | 55 | 7 | 26 April |
| 2d Plat.(-1 Sec), 588th QM
Ldry Co | SANSAPOR | 32 | 1 | 26 April |
| 174th QM Ldry Plat (Type B) | ORO BAY | 33 | 1 | 1 April |
| 241st QM Ldry Det (Type B) | HOLLANDIA | 33 | 1 | 26 April |
| 164th MP PW Proc Co (-1st
& 2d Plats) | LEYTE | 49 | 7 | 17 April |
| 216th MP Co (Corps) | LEYTE | 150 | 22 | 20 March |

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>STAGING
AREA</u> | <u>PERS</u> | <u>VEH</u> | <u>DATE OF
ATCHMT</u> |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------|---------------------------|
| 1st Plat, 5th Spec Serv Co | MINDORO | 25 | 6 | 20 March |
| 12th Spec Serv Co (-2d, 3d
& 4th Plats) | LEYTE | 39 | 8 | 20 March |
| 210th CIC Det | LEYTE | 17 | 7 | 14 March 44 |
| 475th CIC Det | LEYTE | 17 | 7 | 20 March |
| 180th Cml Comp Plat (-Dets) | LEYTE | 44 | 7 | 20 March |
| 14th PCAU | LEYTE | 49 | 3 | 20 March |
| 29th PCAU | LEYTE | 49 | 3 | 20 March |
| 30th PCAU | LEYTE | 49 | 3 | 20 March |
| 191st Fin Disb Unit | LEYTE | 8 | 0 | 20 March |
| 197th Fin Disb Unit | SANSAPOR | 8 | 0 | 20 March |
| 159th APU | SANSAPOR | 13 | 1 | 20 March |
| | | <hr/> | <hr/> | |
| TOTAL | | 11,127 | 2,258 | |
| GRAND TOTAL | | 49,773 | 8,965 | |

ANNEX 1-A

24TH INF DIV (REINFORCED)

COMBAT UNITS

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>STAGING
AREA</u> | <u>PERS</u> | <u>VEH</u> | <u>DATE OF
ATCHMT</u> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------|---------------------------|
| 24th Infantry Division | MINDORO | 14,232 | 2,025 | 20 March |
| 19th Inf Regt | | | | |
| 21st Inf Regt | | | | |
| 34th Inf Regt | | | | |
| 24th Inf Div Arty Hq | | | | |
| 13th FA (105 How) Bn | | | | |
| 52d FA (105 How) Bn | | | | |
| 63d FA (105 How) Bn | | | | |
| 11th FA (155 How) Bn | | | | |
| 24th Med Bn | | | | |
| 3d Engr (C) Bn | | | | |
| 24th Inf Div Spec Trps Hq | | | | |
| 24th Inf Div MP Plat | | | | |
| 24th Inf Div Band | | | | |
| 24th Sig Co | | | | |
| 24th QM Co | | | | |
| 24th Cav Rcn Trp | | | | |
| 724th Ord LM Co | | | | |
| 533d Engr B & S Regt | MINDORO | 2,182 | 281 | 6 April |
| 1461st Engr Boat Maint Co | MINDORO | 191 | 83 | 6 April |
| Det, 163d Ord Maint Co (ESB) | MINDORO | 30 | 5 | 6 April |
| 80th Cml Mortar Bn (-Co B) | LEYTE | 672 | 265 | 17 April |
| 716th Tk Bn (-Cos C & B) | MINDORO | 491 | 153 | 20 March |
| 640th TD Bn | MINDORO | 787 | 193 | 3 April |
| 658th Amph Trac Bn | MINDORO | 522 | 149 | 20 March |
| TOTAL | | 19,107 | 3,154 | |

SERVICE UNITS

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>STAGING
AREA</u> | <u>PERS</u> | <u>VEH</u> | <u>DATE OF
ATCHMT</u> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------|---------------------------|
| 297th Port Co | MINDORO | 225 | 9 | 20 March |
| 313th Port Co | MINDORO | 225 | 9 | 6 April |
| 824th Amph Trk Co | MOROTAI | 184 | 58 | 3 May |
| 30th Evac Hosp (400 bed) | LEYTE | 256 | 45 | 17 April |
| 57th Port Surg Hosp | MINDORO | 37 | 3 | 6 April |
| 62d Port Surg Hosp | MINDORO | 37 | 3 | 4 April |
| 64th Port Surg Hosp | MINDORO | 37 | 3 | 6 April |
| 395th Med Coll Co | MINDORO | 105 | 16 | 20 March |
| 603d Med Clr Co | MINDORO | 117 | 18 | 4 April |
| 401st Med Comp Unit (Mal
Surv) | LEYTE | 13 | 4 | 1 April |
| 204th Mal Surv Unit | MOROTAI | 13 | 4 | 4 May |
| 56th Mal Cont Unit | MINDORO | 12 | 3 | 20 March |
| 60th Mal Cont Unit | MOROTAI | 12 | 3 | 4 May |
| 102d Mal Cont Unit | MINDORO | 12 | 3 | 30 March |
| Det, 578th Ord Am Co | MINDORO | 85 | 8 | 6 April |
| Det, 558th Ord HM Co (Tk) | MINDORO | 26 | 13 | 20 March |
| 181st Ord Bomb Disp Sq | MINDORO | 7 | 3 | 20 March |
| Hq & Hq Det, 195th QM Bn (MBL) | MINDORO | 19 | 3 | 20 March |
| 983d QM Serv Co | MINDORO | 162 | 4 | 30 March |
| 3d Plat, 343d QM Dep Sup Co | ORO BAY | 60 | 2 | 1 April |
| 686th QM Bkry Co | MINDORO | 89 | 4 | 6 April |
| (-3d & 4th Plats) | | | | |
| 417th QM Refrig Det (Mbl) | ORO BAY | 8 | 6 | 1 April |
| 1st Plat, 3064th QM GR Co | MINDORO | 24 | 2 | 20 March |
| 3d Sec, 110th QM GR Plat | MINDORO | 12 | 2 | 20 March |
| 1st Plat (-2d Sec), | MINDORO | 32 | 1 | 20 March |
| 580th QM Ldry Co | | | | |
| Det, 180th Cml Comp Plat | LEYTE | 10 | 0 | 29 April |
| 295th JASCO | MINDORO | 500 | 83 | 20 March |
| TOTAL | | 2,319 | 312 | |
| GRAND TOTAL | | 21,426 | 3,466 | |

ANNEX 1-B

31ST INF DIV (REINFORCED)

COMBAT UNITS

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>STAGING
AREA</u> | <u>PERS</u> | <u>VEH</u> | <u>DATE OF
ATCHMT</u> |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------|---------------------------|
| 31st Inf Div | MOROTAI | 14,232 | 2,507 | 20 March |
| 124th Inf Regt | | | | |
| 155th Inf Regt | | | | |
| 167th Inf Regt | | | | |
| 31st Inf Div Arty Hq | | | | |
| 116th FA (105 How) Bn | | | | |
| 117th FA (105 How) Bn | | | | |
| 149th FA (105 How) Bn | | | | |
| 114th FA (155 How) Bn | | | | |
| 106th Med Bn | | | | |
| 106th Engr (C) Bn | | | | |
| 31st Inf Div Sp Trs Hq | | | | |
| 31st Inf Div MP Plat | | | | |
| 31st Inf Div Band | | | | |
| 31st Sig Co | | | | |
| 31st QM Co | | | | |
| 31st Cav Rcn Tr | | | | |
| 731st Ord LM Co | | | | |

SERVICE UNITS

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|-----|----|----------|
| 99th Evac Hosp (400 bed) | MOROTAI | 258 | 45 | 20 March |
| 176th QM Ldry Plat | MOROTAI | 33 | 1 | 20 March |
| (Type B) | | | | |
| 2d Port Surg Hosp | MOROTAI | 37 | 3 | 20 March |
| 13th Port Surg Hosp | MOROTAI | 37 | 3 | 20 March |
| 23d Port Surg Hosp | MOROTAI | 37 | 3 | 20 March |

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>STAGING
AREA</u> | <u>PERS</u> | <u>VEH</u> | <u>DATE OF
ATCHMT</u> |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------|---------------------------|
| 411th Med Coll Co | LEYTE | 105 | 16 | 20 March |
| 656th Med Clr Co | LEYTE | 117 | 18 | 1 April |
| 29th Mal Surv Unit | SANSAPOR | 13 | 4 | 20 March |
| 15th Mal Cont Unit | MOROTAI | 12 | 3 | 20 March |
| 54th Mal Cont Unit | MOROTAI | 12 | 3 | 20 March |
| 182d Ord Bomb Disp Sq | LEYTE | 7 | 3 | 1 April |
| 4th Plat, 370th QM Bkry Co | MINDORO | 39 | 2 | 25 March |
| 418th QM Refrig Det (Mbl) | ORO BAY | 8 | 6 | 1 April |
| 3d Sec, 3d Plat, 3064th
QM Gr Co | SANSAPOR | 12 | 2 | 26 June |
| Det, 180th Gnl Comp Plat | LEYTE | 10 | 0 | 25 March |
| | | <hr/> | <hr/> | |
| | TOTAL | 737 | 112 | |
| | GRAND TOTAL | 14,969 | 2,619 | |

ANNEX 1-C

AIR FORCE

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>STAGING AREA</u> | <u>PERS</u> | <u>VEH</u> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|------------|
| Hedron MAG 24 | LUZON | 268 | 27 |
| Seron MAG 24 | LUZON | 413 | 65 |
| VMSB 133 | LUZON | 223 | 91 |
| VMSB 241 | LUZON | 223 | 91 |
| VMSB 244 | LUZON | 223 | 91 |
| One Flt, 550th Night Fighter Sqdn | MOROTAI | 100 | 22 |
| 1st SAP, 7th Tac Air Comm Sqdn | MINDORO | 22 | 7 |
| 11th SAP, 7th Tac Air Comm Sqdn | MINDORO | 20 | 6 |
| 16th SAP, 7th Tac Air Comm Sqdn | MINDORO | 18 | 5 |
| 25th Liaison Sqdn (-Det) | LEYTE | 67 | 17 |
| 96th AAF Weather Station | LEYTE | 12 | 2 |
| Dets, 3691st & 3717th, 3367th | LEYTE | 32 | 3 |
| Sig Serv Bn, ACS | | | |
| Det, 66th AACCS | LEYTE | 80 | 20 |
| 3d Marine AW Sqdn | MINDORO | 285 | 65 |
| One Plat, 2012th QM Trk Co | ZAMBOANGA | 46 | 33 |
| 319th Fighter Cont Sqdn | SOLOMON ISLANDS | 434 | |
| Hq, 551st Sig AW Bn | BOUGAINVILLE | 69 | |
| Hq, Plot Plat, 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th,
& 5th Plats, Co A, 551st SAW Bn | SOLOMON ISLANDS | 397 | |
| Hq, Plot Plat, 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th,
& 5th Plats, Co B, 551st SAW Bn | SOLOMON ISLANDS | 454 | |
| Two Secs, 3d Plat, 109th QM | MINDORO | 20 | 0 |
| Bkry Co | | | |
| GRAND TOTAL | | 3,406 | 545 |

ANNEX 1-D

NAVY

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>STAGING AREA</u> | <u>PERSONNEL</u> |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| Mob Comm Unit | LEYTE | 21 |
| E 21 PT Portable Base Equip | LEYTE | 9 |
| C-3 Radio Sta Oper Base (Small) | LEYTE | 17 |
| B4B Port Dir (Med) | LEYTE | 15 |
| C-8 Visual Station | LEYTE | 8 |
| C-9 Radio Station | LEYTE | 18 |
| G-10, 10 Bed Dispensary | LEYTE | 4 |
| NIA, 250 Man Camp | LEYTE | 25 |
| Malaria Control Team | LEYTE | 5 |
| Small Boat Pool | LEYTE | 35 |
| Small Motor Pool | LEYTE | 5 |
| CB Detachment | LEYTE | 78 |
| NABU #11 | LEYTE | 30 |
| Navy Post Office (Small) | LEYTE | 2 |
| | | <hr/> |
| GRAND TOTAL | | 272 |

ANNEX 1-E

SUBSEQUENTLY ATTACHED TROOPS

ADDITIONAL COMBAT UNITS

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>STAGING
AREA</u> | <u>PERS</u> | <u>VEH</u> | <u>DATE OF
ATTCHMT</u> |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------|----------------------------|
| 162d RCT | ZAMBOANGA | 2,826 | 190 | 4 May |
| 162d Inf Regt | | | | |
| 205th FA (105 How) Bn | | | | |
| Co B, 116th Engr (C) Bn | | | | |
| Co A, 116th Med Bn | | | | |
| Det (6), 41st Sig Co | | | | |
| 108th RCT | LEYTE | 3,994 | 492 | 25 May |
| 108th Inf Regt | | | | |
| 164th FA Bn | | | | |
| Btry B, 245th FA Bn | | | | |
| Co C, 115th Med Bn | | | | |
| Co C, 115th Engr Bn | | | | |
| Co B, 80th Cml Mortar Bn | CEBU | 169 | 31 | 25 May |
| Co B (-2d Plat), 716th Tk Bn | CEBU | 92 | 18 | 25 May |
| 3d Bn, 164th Inf Regt | CEBU | 1,050 | 94 | 25 May |
| 3d Bn (reinf), 163d RCT | ZAMBOANGA | 726 | 40 | |
| TOTAL | | 8,857 | 865 | |

ADDITIONAL SERVICE UNITS

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|-----|---|----------|
| 2d Sec, 3d Plat, 109th | MINDORO | 8 | 0 | 10 April |
| QM Bkry Co | | | | |
| Det, 3608th Ord HM Co Tk | ZAMBOANGA | 11 | 4 | 15 April |
| 158th Ord Bomb Disp Sq | LEYTE | 7 | 3 | 4 May |
| 1 Surg Team, 168th Evac Hosp | MINDORO | 8 | 0 | 10 May |
| 209th Ord Bomb Disp Sq | LUZON | 7 | 3 | 15 May |
| 608th Port Co | PANAY | 225 | 9 | 22 May |

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>STAGING
AREA</u> | <u>PERS</u> | <u>VEH</u> | <u>DATE OF
ATTCHMT</u> |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------|----------------------------|
| 6th Msg Cen Team | LEYTE | 11 | 0 | 25 May |
| 6th Rad Tg Fixed Sta Team | LEYTE | 9 | 2 | 25 May |
| Det, 31st SAP | LEYTE | 13 | 2 | 25 May |
| 865th Engr Avn Bn (-1 Co) | CEBU | 624 | 230 | 25 May |
| 1st Field Hosp | LEYTE | 159 | 19 | 25 May |
| Co B (-Det), 262d Med Bn | LEYTE | 62 | 11 | 25 May |
| PCAU #17 | LEYTE | 62 | 11 | 25 May |
| 2d Sec, 1st Plat, 151st QM
Bkry Co | LEYTE | 8 | 0 | 25 May |
| 1st Sec, 3d Plat, 601st QM
GR Co | LEYTE | 6 | 1 | 25 May |
| Det, Hq & Hq Co, 542d EB & SR | LEYTE | 61 | 3 | 25 May |
| 1st Plat, Co B & Co E, 542
EB & SR | LEYTE | 280 | 30 | 25 May |
| 103d Mal Cont Det | LEYTE | 62 | 11 | 25 May |
| 100th Ord Bomb Disp Sq | LEYTE | 7 | 3 | 25 May |
| Det, 106th Ord MM Co | CEBU | 61 | 12 | 25 May |
| Det, 623d Ord Am Co | LEYTE | 61 | 3 | 25 May |
| 393d QM Trk Co | LEYTE | 110 | 79 | 25 May |
| 1st Prov Bomb Disp Sq,
623d Ord Am Co | LEYTE | 7 | 3 | 25 May |
| Det, 592d JASCO | LEYTE | 5 | 1 | 25 May |
| 476th CIC Det | LEYTE | 17 | 7 | 25 May |
| 477th CIC Det | LEYTE | 17 | 7 | 25 May |
| 446th CIC Det | LEYTE | 17 | 7 | 28 May |
| 636th Port Co | CEBU | 225 | 9 | 31 May |
| | | <hr/> | <hr/> | |
| TOTALS | | 2,150 | 470 | |
| GRAND TOTAL | | 11,007 | 1,335 | |

NOTE:

The following units were relieved from attached to X Corps on the dates indicated:

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>DATE RELD</u> |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Btry B, 166th AAA Gun Bn | 29 June |
| Det, 125th Sig Radio Intell Co | 23 June |

| <u>UNIT</u> | <u>DATE RECD</u> |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Det, 558th Ord HM Co (Tk) | 28 June |
| 108th RCT | 28 June |
| 108th Inf Regt | |
| 164th FA Bn | |
| Btry B, 245th FA Bn | |
| Co C, 115th Med Bn | |
| Co C, 115th Engr Bn | |
| 3d Bn, 164th Inf Regt | 17 June |
| Det, 31st SAP | 12 June |

ANNEX 2

CASUALTIES (from 17 April to 30 June)

| | <u>FRIENDLY</u> | | | | <u>ENEMY</u> | |
|------------------------|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| | <u>KIA</u> | <u>WIA</u> | <u>MIA</u> | <u>KIA</u> | <u>PW</u> | <u>MISC*</u> |
| 24th Infantry Division | 426 | 2050 | 1 | 6584 | 75 | 172 |
| 31st Infantry Division | 156 | 512 | 0 | 2130 | 26 | 18 |
| X Corps Units | 46 | 217 | 2 | 337 | 21 | — |
| 10th Military District | — | — | — | 527 | 11 | 10 |
| | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- |
| Total | 628 | 2779 | 3 | 9578 | 133 | 200 |

* Misc: Includes Korean and Formosan PWs and enemy aliens.

ANNEX 3

AIR SUPPORT

By mid 1944, the stage had been set for the initiation of aerial warfare in the Philippines. The Japanese had established a strong air defense through the Moluccas, to the west of New Guinea, protecting the approaches. Behind this, strong defenses had been established on Mindanao.

In late July, 1944, our air forces began to strike the chain of enemy air bases which were the key to the aerial defense of the Philippines. Long range aircraft from Biak, Noemfoor, and Sansapor made the first air attack on Davao City on 4 August, 1944, and once having gained the initiative, never relinquished it. During the latter part of August, 1944, General MacArthur announced that as a result of air strikes this Japanese chain of aerial defenses had been broken, and a short time later, that air supremacy had been achieved over the southern Philippines.

Nearly one hundred and twenty airfields, landing strips, and emergency strips were available to the Japanese on Mindanao. The Japanese did not attempt to maintain and operate all of these fields, but confined their efforts to approximately thirty fields, mainly in the Davao and Del Monte areas.

Japanese air units charged with the defense of Mindanao were elements of the Second Air Division, with the 15th Air Regiment being the principal unit identified. Possibly, elements of the 17th and 19th Air Regiments were present at various times. Many other units had been staged through these fields but the maximum air strength probably never exceeded 1,500 planes. The First Naval Air Fleet

maintained the 61st Air Flotilla and elements of the 26th Air Flotilla on Mindanao comprising the 954th Air Group (Navy) with at least portions of the 153d, 742d, 761st, 763d, and 955th Naval Air Units.

The reduction of these forces continued through the Leyte Campaign and became particularly intense during the period the Mindoro and Luzon convoys were passing through the Mindanao Sea. The pattern followed until the Victor Five Operation was launched, was the continuance of strikes on airfields and attacks on targets of opportunity.

The actual measure of the destruction of the Japanese Air Force was indicated by the number of aircraft that appeared over Mindanao during the Victor Five Operation. Only five planes were sighted in the air throughout the campaign. Two of these made early morning reconnaissances, one made a dusk reconnaissance, one attempted to land on Libby Airdrome in the Davao area as our troops were capturing the field, and the fifth was shot down by a Marine B-25 in the Del Monte area. This was the end of the Japanese airpower in Mindanao.

Nine months of strategic aerial bombing had rendered the Japanese aerial offensive capabilities a minor factor. With the first two phases of aerial warfare complete: the neutralization of the enemy air strength, and the isolation of the battlefield, the third and tactical phase of direct attack on enemy ground troops was initiated.

The preliminary air attack in direct support of the landing on Mindanao was based upon the following plan:

- (1) Heavy bombardment strikes against the principal Japanese installations.
- (2) Systematic reduction of the enemy forces in the objective beachhead area and in the Davao region.
- (3) Widespread diversionary raids to maintain security.

(4) Small concentrated attacks against specific targets pinpointed by guerrilla forces.

(5) Road sweeps by fighter and attack bomber aircraft.

In the six days prior to R-Day, heavy bombers hit Cagayan, Davao, Cotabato, Parang, and Kabacan. Mediums struck Surigao, Malabang, Cotabato, and the Sarangani Bay area. Divebombers hit pinpointed targets and fighters made five sweeps a day over the roads and trails throughout the Island.

Close air support started prior to our landing. A guerrilla regiment, aided by air support from the Marine Air Groups at Zamboanga, launched an offensive to seize Malabang Field.

The enemy was forced to withdraw, and planes were landed on the newly captured base. As the front lines were then less than a half mile from the airstrip, Marine pilots visited ground observation posts for briefing, and after studying enemy defenses, flew a mere 800 yards before releasing their bombs on primary hostile targets.

Under constant air attack, the enemy was driven south by guerrillas toward Parang, and the stage was set for our landing.

The air support plan for the first five days of the operation follows: first, to provide combat air patrols over the convoys and beachhead; second, to maintain a six-plane air alert over the advancing ground elements; and third, to strike targets immediately in front of advancing ground forces. A series of prearranged targets had been planned and it was on these that the efforts of Marine Air Groups at Zamboanga and Marine Air Group 24 were directed. In addition, planes of the Thirteenth Air Force were pounding targets in the rear areas.

Road sweeps were continued and a new element was added to harass the enemy - "Night Hecklers". These aircraft,

Marine PBJs, flew over the central plateau and the Davao area night after night dropping bombs and flares, and when a suitable target was discovered, dove to strafe and launch rockets. Shortly after this type of attack was inaugurated, one plane sighted a Japanese truck column at Linabo resulting in the destruction of thirty-six vehicles.

On R plus 3, the first elements of Marine Air Group 24 arrived at Malabang Field, and the first missions by this unit were flown on R plus 4, one day ahead of schedule.

"Marine Air Groups Zamboanga" was the term applied to the unified command established for the tactical employment of the several Marine Groups stationed at Moret Field, Zamboanga. This command controlled the following units:

Marine Air Group 12 (fighter) Marine Air Group 32 (divebomber)

VMF 115 (F4U)

VMF 116 (F4U)

VMF 211 (F4U)

VMF 218 (F4U)

VMSB 142 (SBD)

VMSB 236 (SBD)

VMSB 243 (SBD)

VMSB 341 (SBD)

VMB 611 (PBJ) attached

Miscellaneous:

Detachment, 550th Night Fighter Squadron (P-61)

Detachment, 13th Emergency Rescue Squadron (OA-10)

Upon arrival at Malabang Field, Marine Air Group 24 with VMSB 133, 241, and 244, all originally equipped with Douglas Dauntless Divebombers, came under the control of Marine Air Group Zamboanga. Since the distance between the two commands was so great, Marine Air Group 24 operated practically as a separate unit. Night fighters and local combat air patrols for the Malabang area were furnished by Marine Air Group Zamboanga to Marine Air Group 24 from the fighters available at Zamboanga.

Control of support air missions remained with Corps due to several factors. The distances support aircraft had to fly to provide support, the two separate Marine

air headquarters (not including the Thirteenth Air Force which furnished heavy strikes), the two divisions operating in widely separated zones, and the necessity for close coordination with the guerrillas, made centralized control necessary.

To facilitate this control, Support Aircraft Parties were assigned to X Corps and the 24th and 31st Infantry Divisions. The support aircraft officer worked closely with the Air Officer of the divisions, and provided communication facilities for direct support requests.

In addition, the 295th Joint Assault Signal Company supplied 12 Forward Air Control Teams (FACTs) with short range air-ground radios mounted in jeeps. These teams were apportioned between the two divisions with the primary mission of directing close support strikes.

Preplanned requests for air support originated with the lower echelons, were consolidated by the division SAP, after approval by the division, and were dispatched to X Corps. These requests were combined with the requirements of Corps plans and sent to the two air units concerned.

Following mornings, flights requested checked in with SAPs according to schedule, being in turn assigned to a "FACT" station which controlled the strike. If the strike was outside the close support area, flights checked in with SAPs, and received final clearance prior to the attack.

The system employed was unique in several features. A constant air-alert commensurate with the ground situation was maintained overhead to minimize the delay between requests and the actual strikes. Another feature of the system was that the JASCO Teams were used throughout the entire campaign. With the SAP thus augmented, it was not necessary to shift the "FACT" from one front line unit to another as strikes were needed. The result was that a battalion commander could request air support and had reasonable assurance that the strike would be made when he needed it. This also permitted numerous concurrent strikes which had not been feasible in previous operations.

In addition, Marine Air Liaison Parties were made available to supplement the JASCO teams, and to advise commanders on the capabilities of Marine aircraft. One of the many outstanding examples of close support during the campaign was conducted by one of these teams. On 9 May, the 2d Battalion, 124th Infantry, had pushed north past Lake Pinalay-USA to the vicinity of Maramag Airstrip #1. Strong resistance was encountered, and elements of the battalion moved to flank the enemy position.

Friendly and enemy forces were about two hundred yards apart and the weather was closing in. Panels were employed to indicate friendly positions. The target was marked with smoke, and nine divebombers dropped nearly five tons of bombs within the 200 yard area and the Japanese position was completely eliminated.

While such close support was not a common occurrence, there were many close support strikes that enabled the troops to move forward without resistance. In the main, however, the Japs presented will-of-the-wisp targets, and secondary objectives received most of the strikes.

The normal air alert was increased from three to six planes as the troops approached Davao, and an intensified effort was made to break up Japanese defensive positions. The pace reached between 150 and 200 sorties a day. The largest number of strikes in one day involved 245 aircraft, dropping 155 tons of bombs.

On 30 April, a new type of attack was employed. Napalm, or fire bombs, were used for the first time when they were dropped on enemy positions on Hill 550 in the Davao area. From this time on, fire from the air was available, with strikes as large as thirty-two 165 gallon tanks being dropped on a target. In several instances, entire enemy platoons were burned in their positions and in other cases, flaming Japanese fled from positions, only to encounter machine gun fire from ground troops.

On 1 June, another method was tried - saturation bombing of a very small area by divebombers. 72 SBDs hit a

troop concentration and gun positions with a variety of bomb loads which was followed by 16 planes, Napalm loaded. The attack was successful, and troops were able to advance through the area without the expected usually stubborn enemy defense.

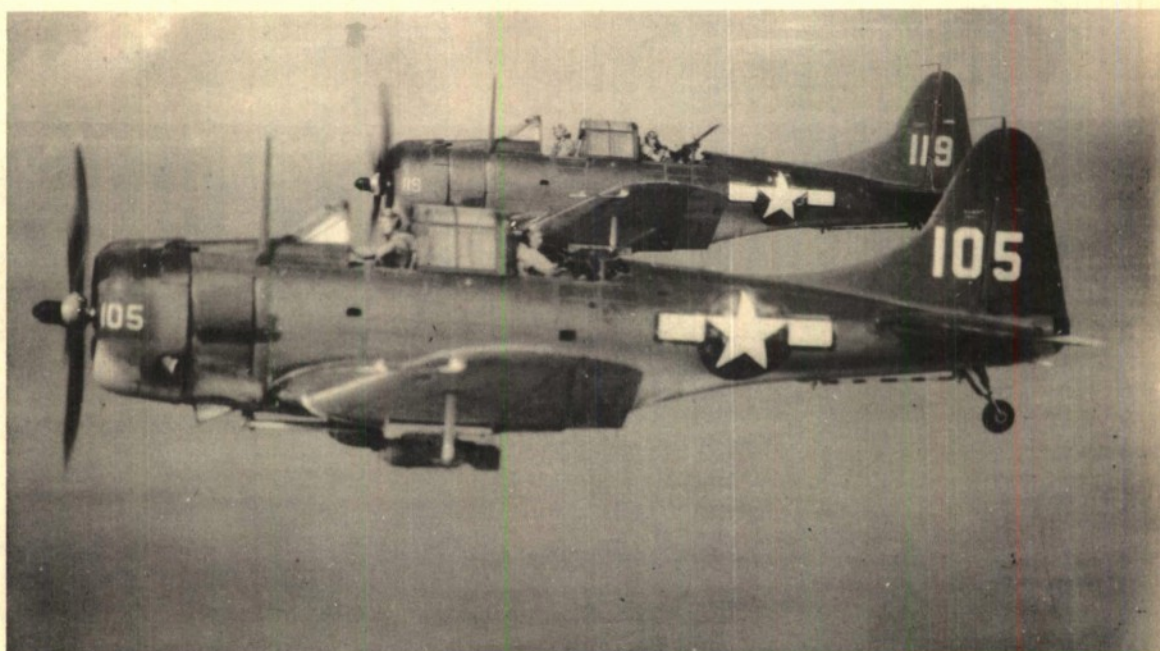
On 19 June, an artillery liaison plane of the 31st Infantry Division observed numerous groups of enemy troops, remnants of the Japanese 30th Division, moving into the Umayam River Valley. Immediately, every airborne aircraft was concentrated in this area.

The following morning additional liaison planes flew over this area and observers located enemy concentrations, but unfavorable weather prevented the attack planes from reaching the target area.

On 21 June, all available aircraft that could be spared from other missions were requested to hit this area. Airborne coordinators in L-4s, L-5s, and SBDs combined to direct a total of 148 divebombers and fighterbombers loaded with over 75 tons of bombs on targets in the area during the four hour period. Targets hit included bivouac areas, supplies, newly constructed buildings, and a moving column of troops. Because of the canyon-like valley, the heavy rain forest, and unfavorable weather conditions, observations of results were limited, but several large fires were started, bodies were seen floating in the river, and Japanese were observed fleeing before the strafing guns of the planes. Later, ground reports indicated approximately 500 Japs were killed in this attack.

A total of 10,406 combat sorties were flown in support of X Corps from 17 April to 30 June, and a total of 4,800 tons of bombs were dropped. Nearly 1,300 five-inch rockets were fired in low level attacks against Japanese installations.

From the first strategic attack until the final Japanese defeat, more than 20,000 sorties of all type planes were flown in support of the Mindanao Campaign.



CLOSE AIR SUPPORT FOR THE MINDANAO OPERATION WAS PROVIDED
BY MARINE SB2Cs (Pictured Above), F4Us, AND PBJs.
".....GROUND TO AIR, WELL DONE!" -- MAJOR GENERAL SIBERT.

ANNEX 4

EMPLOYMENT OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT ARTILLERY AS INFANTRY

The almost complete absence of Japanese air power in Mindanao, soon made the employment of antiaircraft units in their primary role unnecessary.

Consequently, on 4 May, the first unit, Battery C, 383d AAA (AW) Battalion, was relieved and moved to the Pikit-Kabakan area to provide security details and establish road blocks. Ten days later, the remainder of the Battalion was attached to the 162d Regimental Combat Team, and the Battalion was assigned the mission of protecting the Pulangi River crossings at Pikit and Kabakan, furnishing ground defense of Padada Airdrome and providing security and traffic control on the Sayre Highway from Kabakan to the Mulita River Bridge.

On 17 May, Battery B, 222d AAA S/L Battalion, relieved elements of the 162d Infantry in the Cotabato area. Infantry support weapons and portable radios were added.

Extensive foot, motor, and amphibious patrolling was conducted south of Cotabato. An enemy force, estimated at approximately 300, consisting of elements of the 166th Independent Infantry Battalion and service units, occupied the Nuro and Mt Blik areas, approximately 25 miles south of Cotabato.

By aggressive patrol action, the hostile force was driven south of the Marader River Valley; and in a series of small actions, a total of 50 Japanese were killed while the Battery suffered only two casualties. The enemy force was broken and remnants scattered.

On 16 May, the 496th AAA Gun Battalion (less Battery C which was attached to the 24th Infantry Division, and later

to X Corps Artillery, in a Field Artillery role) was attached to the 162d Regimental Combat Team and assigned the security of the line of communication from Malabang to the Simuay River (south of Parang), and the Dulawan area along the Mindanao River. In addition to protecting bridges and installations in its zones, motorized patrols along Highway #1 were maintained. Foot and motorized patrols made many minor contacts and contributed materially to the destruction of enemy remnants in the Parang area.

On 27 May, the 487th AAA (AW) Battalion (less Battery D attached to the 24th Infantry Division), Battery B, 166th AAA Gun Battalion, the 496th AAA Gun Battalion (less Battery C), and Battery B, 222d AAA S/L Battalion, were constituted as the "AAA Force" and attached to the 106th Division (Filipino).

This composite unit relieved the 162d Regimental Combat Team of the security of lines of communication from Parang to Digos on Highway #1 and north on the Sayre Highway from Kabakan to the Mulita River Bridge. This permitted the employment of the 162d Regimental Combat Team in the Davao area. The further mission of locating and destroying remaining hostile forces in Cotabato Province was assigned.

Extensive combat patrolling in the zone of action was conducted. Numerous minor contacts were made along the Sayre Highway, northeast of Kabakan, north of the Dilap-Pikit area and between Highway #1 and the Mindanao River. Small enemy groups were contacted periodically and destroyed or dispersed.

Despite numerous enemy harassing attacks on installations and bridges along the long lines of communications, no damage was inflicted on dumps, communications facilities, or bridges. Coordination with Guerrilla forces was excellent, and combined patrols were very successful in mopping up scattered remnants bypassed by our initial inland drive.

Battery D, 487th AAA (AW) Battalion, attached to the 24th Infantry Division, provided direct fire support on several occasions. During the period the 34th Infantry was heavily engaged with strong enemy cave and pillbox

defenses on the high ground northeast of the Talomo River, this Battery's 40mm guns were employed in direct fire on enemy cave positions and pillboxes. It was found that the Bofors guns could be positioned in difficult terrain and provide accurate and rapid direct fire against ground defenses. After enemy defenses in this area were broken, the Battery continued to secure communication facilities on Hill 550 and repulsed several minor enemy infiltrations.

On 12 June, the 383d AAA (AW) Battalion moved from the Kabakan area to Del Monte. Under the command of the Bugo-Del Monte Area Command, largely staffed by Headquarters, 116th AAA Group, the Battalion provided security detachments in the Bugo area and coordinated Guerrilla bridge guards along the Sayre Highway from Bugo to Dalwang-an.

The employment of antiaircraft artillery units in ground missions proved highly satisfactory. Not only were infantry troops relieved from line of communication security, thereby concentrating them for offensive action, but anti-aircraft units were able, after a minimum of reequipping and retraining, to perform minor infantry missions.

The maintenance of uninterrupted lines of communication and the mopping up of enemy remnants in Cotabato Province by Antiaircraft units were very material contributions to the success of the Mindanao Campaign.

ANNEX 5

GUERRILLAS

Prior to the Victor Five Operation, guerrilla forces of the 10th Military District gathered valuable intelligence which greatly assisted in the planning of the Operation. Further, by persistent harassing actions, large areas of Mindanao were cleared of enemy forces.

The 10th Military District comprised six divisions and one separate regiment, of which five divisions operated in Mindanao east of Zamboanga Peninsula. The operational areas of the guerrilla divisions were as follows:

| | <u>Province</u> |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 106th Division (Fil) | Cotabato |
| 107th Division (Fil) | Davao and Southern
Agusan |
| 108th Division (Fil) | Lanao |
| 109th Division (Fil) | Bukidnon |
| 110th Division (Fil) | Surigao and Northern
Agusan |

The seventh province, Misamis Oriental, was divided between the 108th, 109th and 110th Divisions (Fil).

Total troops under the control of the 10th Military District were 38,000, armed with nearly 20,000 weapons. An extensive intelligence and coast watcher system had been established with over 70 radio stations operating throughout Mindanao.

On 17 March, elements of the 108th Division (Fil), supported by aircraft from Marine Air Groups Zamboanga, initiated an attack on Japanese forces garrisoning the Malabang area. By 13 April, the enemy had been forced

to withdraw from the Malabang area, enabling X Corps to land unopposed at Malabang with a small force, diverting the main landing team to Parang.

The Commanding General, X Corps, on landing, assumed control of all guerrilla forces on Mindanao. Thereafter, they performed creditably with and in support of American troops.

The Expeditionary Battalion, 108th Division (Fil), which had been garrisoning Malabang, was moved overwater to Santa Cruz on 3 May and attached to the 24th Infantry Division. The Battalion was initially employed guarding installations in the Talomo area, but was moved to Davao to garrison the City when the 19th Infantry began its advance from Davao to Ising. After being relieved of the security of Davao City, the Battalion was attached to the 21st Infantry and actively participated in clearing the area west of Mintal.

On 4 May, the 106th Division (Fil) was attached to the 162d Regimental Combat Team. The Division was assigned security missions in the Cotabato, Pikit, Kabakan, and Digos areas, and provided bridge guards on Highway #1 from the Simuay River to Digos.

On 4 June, the 106th Division (Fil) relieved the 162d Regimental Combat Team of the security of Cotabato Province. The Division was reinforced by Antiaircraft units and was assigned the missions of securing installations, protecting lines of communication, and destroying enemy forces in its zone.

The 116th Infantry (Fil) continued to operate in the lower Sarangani Bay area furnishing intelligence on Japanese forces cut off in that area.

The 1st Battalion, 118th Infantry (Fil), was attached to the 31st Infantry Division and was actively employed by the 167th Infantry along the Kibawe-Talomo Trail.

Elements of the 119th Infantry (Fil) supported Battery

B, 222d AAA S/L Battalion, in its operations south of Cotabato.

The Division conducted extensive patrolling in the Cotabato, Kabakan, and Pikit areas, and contributed materially to the mopping up of enemy remnants in Cotabato Province.

On 23 May, the 19th Infantry established contact with elements of the 107th Division (Fil) at the Tagum River. The Provisional Battalion, 107th Division (Fil), was moved to the Davao-Cabaguio area and the 130th Infantry (Fil) relieved the 19th Infantry of the security of Highway #1 northeast of Davao. After enemy resistance was broken in the Mandog area, the Provisional Battalion, 107th Division (Fil), less Company M securing Davao City, moved to the Mandog Hills and assumed the security of that area.

On 1 June, the 108th Division (Fil) was assigned the mission of securing Lanao Province. Guards were furnished for bridges on Highway #1 from Malabang to Cagayan and security furnished for X Corps installations at Malabang.

On 2 June, the 111th and 112th Infantries (Fil) were attached to the 31st Infantry Division and the 109th Infantry (Fil) to the Bugo-Del Monte Area Command. On 9 June, the 117th Infantry (Fil) assembled and was attached to the 31st Infantry Division.

The 109th Infantry (Fil) was employed to secure the Cagayan-Bugo area and provide bridge guards along the Sayre Highway from Bugo to Del Monte.

The 111th, 112th, and 117th Regiments (Fil) supported the 31st Infantry Division in its advance east from the Sayre Highway to the Pulangi River. Guerrillas proved particularly valuable as scouts and as garrison forces for reoccupied areas.

In addition to the activities of guerrilla units directly attached to American forces, several operations were conducted in indirect support of contemplated opera-

tions of American troops. These guerrilla operations were planned to either drive enemy forces into areas where advancing American troops could destroy them or to deny routes of withdrawal to Japanese groups fleeing before American advances.

The 110th Division (Fil), less the 110th Infantry, was assigned the mission of harassing enemy garrisons in Surigao Province. Elements of the 113th Infantry (Fil) made an amphibious landing in the Butuan area of the Agusan River Valley, and by a series of actions, cleared the enemy from the northern Agusan River Valley in preparation for 31st Infantry Division operations in that area.

The 107th Division (Fil) was directed to block Highway #1 in the Ising-Tagum River area to contain enemy forces withdrawing before the 19th Infantry's drive north from Davao. Numerous contacts were made with enemy forces trying to break through, but all attacks were repulsed and the mission successfully accomplished.

To clear the Bugo area preparatory to the landing of the 108th Regimental Combat Team the 109th, 110th and 120th Infantry Regiments (Fil) were concentrated and moved toward the Macajalar Bay area. The 109th and 120th Regiments (Fil) blocked enemy withdrawal to the west while the 110th Infantry drove across the Tagaloan River and harassed enemy forces defending the Bugo area forcing the Japanese to withdraw to the south.

The guerrilla forces on Mindanao contributed materially to the success of the campaign.

ANNEX 6

SIGNAL OPERATIONS

GENERAL

The Victor Five Operation offered a complex problem in the establishment and maintenance of communications between X Corps and its senior, subordinate, and supporting units. The size of the Island, the anticipated poor condition of roads, and the expected wide separation of units, were basic considerations in the planning phases.

The Operation offers one of the few instances in this Theatre in which all agencies of communication, including radio intelligence and VHF radio carrier equipment as well as Signal supply and repair, functioned under Corps control. In addition, this Operation was unique from a communications standpoint due to the almost exclusive use of VHF radio links for long telephone and teletype circuits.

The rapid movement of units over long distances in jungle and mountainous terrain, and the complex nature of command post displacements, afforded an excellent and rigorous test for all agencies of communications. It was demonstrated that VHF radio carrier systems are the best solution yet found for the problems of electrical communications encountered in this Theatre. Also, liaison-type aircraft are essential for messenger service in operations of this type.

Preliminary activities and planning were as follows:

1. All personnel assigned or attached to the 99th Signal Battalion were organized into groups, such as the Composite Radio Operations Platoon and the Composite

Message Center Platoon, with personnel from six units. This was necessitated by the numerous small units with which the Battalion was augmented.

2. While in the staging area, three complete Command Post Communications Detachments, designated as the Forward, Rear, and Reserve Command Post Detachments were formed. Except for augmentation for special missions as required, each detachment consisted of personnel and equipment necessary to establish, operate, and maintain all agencies of communications for an echelon of X Corps. The Rear Detachment made the initial command post installation, the Forward and Reserve Detachments assisted until such time as it became necessary to establish a new command post. Each Detachment, complete with equipment, was transported to the objective area by separate ships.

3. Signal supply, repair, and radio intelligence services would function directly under the supervision of the Commanding Officer, 99th Signal Battalion.

WIRE CONSTRUCTION

VHF radio telephone and telegraph carrier equipment was furnished to establish long trunk circuits between X Corps and its major subordinate headquarters in lieu of wire circuits. The reasons were anticipated poor roads, long distances between units, flexibility, speed of installation, and comparatively low maintenance requirements.

Wire construction efforts were limited to missions as follows:

1. Supplementing VHF radio in places where installation of that equipment was not practicable due to limited equipment available.

2. Installing field wire or cable circuits to major units or installations that were accessible by road from the nearest Corps or Division switchboard.

3. Furnishing of wire circuits to combat units when stability of the tactical situation justified construction.

4. Establishing semi-permanent or permanent wire facilities for Malabang Airstrip, the Parang-Cotabato area, and such other construction as required by tactical or administrative developments.

Only 140 miles of cable CC-358 (Spiral-Four) were furnished initially. This limited its use to trunk lines of sufficient length (15 miles or more) to require the additional transmission distances characteristic of this cable, and for circuits from VHF radio transmitter locations to switchboards. An additional 100 miles of Spiral-Four cable was received later in the Operation.

One platoon of Company A, 98th Signal Battalion, landed at Malabang with the 21st Infantry on 17 April (R-Day). Reconnaissance was begun immediately to locate a suitable route for construction of a Spiral-Four cable from Malabang to Parang, a distance of 40 miles. It was found that all bridges along Highway #1 had been destroyed, but that construction routes would have to follow the road to avoid an undesirable beach route. This required the use of Dukws in the numerous streams and rivers to reach isolated sections of the Highway. Work was begun immediately although progress was slow due to the long distance and circuitous construction routes. These construction teams were to effect a juncture with the teams working north from Parang.

On 18 April, the balance of Company A, 98th Signal Battalion, landed at Parang. Construction of local telephone facilities for the X Corps Command Post at Parang and trunk circuits to the 24th Division and other units in that area was begun. Construction of the south end of the Spiral-Four cable to Malabang was begun north on Highway #1 to effect a juncture with the teams from Malabang. The cable was completed 26 April. This cable furnished telephone and teletype service to the units in the Malabang area for the duration of the Operation. During the period 18 - 27 April, VHF radio circuits were used between Mala-

bang and Parang, but upon completion of the cable, this equipment was moved to the X Corps Command Post at Kabakan.

On 19 April, a Spiral-Four cable was installed from Parang to Sinawingan to furnish communications to the 24th Division Command Post at Sinawingan and for other units, including the 31st Infantry Division, advancing along this axis.

At this time it was apparent that wire lines could not be kept up to the Division and that complete reliance would have to be placed on high frequency radio and VHF radio telephone and teletype. A switchboard TC-12 was placed at the Simuay River, and a Spiral-Four cable extended to the 533d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment at Cotabato.

During the period 17 April to 4 May, surveys of the extensive facilities required for the operation of the airfield at Malabang were made, and construction begun.

On 4 May, construction was begun on a lead cable pole line system throughout the immediate base area at Parang. Prior to the time the lead cable system was to be placed in operation, the site of the main base was changed to Bugo. On 27 May, maintenance responsibility for all wire lines in the Malabang-Parang-Cotabato area was assigned to the 295th Joint Assault Signal Company.

On 26 April, the X Corps Command Post opened at Kabakan. Two construction teams had been dispatched to that location on 23 April and had established wire communication facilities. Spiral-Four cable or field wire circuits to the Rear Echelon of the 24th Infantry Division, the 31st Infantry Division, X Corps Artillery, and to the 162d Regimental Combat Team were installed.

Two wire construction teams were dispatched from Parang to the 24th Division at Santa Cruz on 27 April with the mission of constructing Spiral-Four cable to Talomo. Enemy activity in that area caused abandonment of those plans and a VHF radio link was installed. A

cable was laid from the VHF radio terminal at Talomo west to the 24th Division Command Post in the vicinity of Calinan. This cable was placed overhead on existing concrete poles, but much maintenance was required on this cable due to enemy shell fire.

On 27 April, the 31st Infantry Division moved into an assembly area astride the Sayre Highway preparatory to its advance northward. During the first 30 miles of the advance, communications were maintained by field wire circuits installed by Division personnel. Much difficulty was encountered in the installation of VHF radio links in the vicinity of Damulog, Maramag, and Valencia due to mountainous terrain and heavy rain forest. In one case, approximately 10 miles of Spiral-Four cable was installed in the vicinity of Valencia to extend VHF radio circuits from the only available transmitter site to the 31st Division Command Post.

Two wire teams were then ordered to Valencia where X Corps was being moved by air. The wire system for the new X Corps Command Post was installed and a Spiral-Four cable was installed from Valencia to Malaybalay to supplement the VHF radio circuits.

In the Del Monte Area where the X Corps Rear Echelon opened on 13 June, a Spiral-Four cable had been installed from Bugo to Maluko by the 108th Regimental Combat Team. Switchboards were located at the 542d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment, at Bugo, and at the 108th Regimental Combat Team Command Post. On arrival of elements of Company A, 98th Signal Battalion, a five-pair rubber cable was installed overhead from Del Monte to Bugo along the Sayre Highway. Construction was begun on a five-pair open wire line along this route.

On 23 June, the X Corps Command Post moved to Del Monte. After that time, all construction personnel were employed in the Del Monte Area, except 2 teams which were moved to Parang to recover the Spiral-Four and lead cable systems installed there.

One Signal Construction Company within the Corps-type Signal Battalion, aided by a VHF Radio Carrier Terminal Team and 2 VHF Radio Carrier Relay Teams, furnished more rapid, flexible, and dependable communications than would have been possible with four or more Construction Companies. The value of VHF radio in furnishing long trunk telephone and teletype circuits, especially in jungle and mountainous terrain, is inestimable.

It is believed that the Tables of Organization for the Corps-type Signal Battalion should be amended to include 1 VHF Radio Platoon equipped with approximately 8 Radio Terminal Sets AN/TRC-3's and 4 Radio Relay Sets AN/TRC-4's, with necessary carrier terminal equipment for 8 complete terminals. The necessity for 2 Construction Companies in these battalions would be reduced to 1, with a greater economy of personnel.

WIRE OPERATIONS

Missions of telephone and teletype communication agencies included installation and operation of telephone and teletype facilities for the various echelons of X Corps and subordinate units, and installation of wire facilities for the Malabang Airstrip area.

Teletype service was established to the 24th Infantry Division on 19 April by simplexing one field wire circuit. Two talking circuits were established from X Corps to Marine Air Group 24 at Malabang Airstrip by VHF radio facilities. On 20 April, a single channel VHF radio talking circuit was established between Parang and Cotabato to serve units in that area. A teletype net was installed in the Malabang Airstrip area, serving Base Operations, Airways Communication Squadron, Air Operations, and Marine Air Group 24.

On 25 April, five-pair rubber cables were run to the VHF station at Parang from the Corps switchboard for telephone and teletype circuits. Two field wire trunks were installed and simplexed for a teletype circuit to the 31st

Infantry Division and 2 field wire talking circuits were installed to the Navy Base.

On 27 April, Spiral-Four cable was connected through to serve the 1st Battalion, 533d Engineer Boat and Shore Regiment, at Cotabato. Cable line to Malabang was completed by Company A, 98th Signal Battalion, and circuits to MAG 24 then consisted of a single VHF radio voice channel and 2 cable land lines furnishing 1 teletype and 2 voice channels.

On 14 May, VHF radio equipment at Malabang was moved to the X Corps Command Post at Kabakan. Radio telephone and teletype circuits between Malabang and Dover were discontinued, leaving 2 telephone and teletype circuits operating on land lines.

On 23 April, the Forward Echelon Detachment of the 99th Signal Battalion departed Parang for Kabakan with the mission of establishing a signal center at that location.

VHF radio telephone and telegraph circuits were established with the X Corps Rear Echelon at Parang on 25 April, and on 26 April, the Corps Command Post moved to Kabakan. Wire circuits for telephone and teletype were installed to the 31st Infantry Division, X Corps Artillery, and the 24th Division Rear Echelon.

A Spiral-Four cable was constructed to the X Corps Supply Point and the 162d Regimental Combat Team at Pikit. VHF radio circuits, furnishing two telephone and teletype circuits, were established with the 24th Division at Santa Cruz on 29 April. This installation remained at Kabakan until 5 June, and served as the major tactical communications center.

On 31 May, a complete Advance Signal Center Detachment was moved from Kabakan to Valencia by C-47. At Valencia, VHF radio facilities were installed to furnish telephone and teletype trunk circuits to the 108th Regimental Combat Team at Del Monte, the 31st Infantry Divi-

sion at Malaybalay, the "AA Force" at Kabakan, the 24th Infantry Division at Talomo, the X Corps Rear Echelon at Parang, and MAG 24 at Malabang. The X Corps Command Post remained at this location until 23 June.

On 8 June, the balance of the Kabakan signal center was moved to Parang, then to Malabang by LCM, by road to Alubihid, LCM to Bugo, and finally to Valencia by road. The extreme difficulties of transportation which were characteristic of the Operation made this command post move one of the most complex and difficult recorded.

During the period 4 - 10 June, a small wire and operations team was moved from Parang to the Del Monte Airstrip by C-47 to set up X Corps Rear Echelon switchboard facilities. One wire operations team remained at Parang to maintain and operate communications.

On 6 June, the complete Rear Echelon Signal Detachment left Parang and arrived at Del Monte on 10 June.

During the period 25 June - 30 June, telephone communications to the 25th Liaison Squadron located adjacent to the X Corps Command Post were installed. In addition, 1500 feet of underground cable was laid for this unit and for expected future requirements in this area.

CW RADIO OPERATIONS

During the communications planning for the Mindanao Operation, much emphasis was placed upon the necessity for each major unit of X Corps to remain continuously in the radio circuits. Radio would also be the only electrical means of communication with Eighth Army, the 41st Infantry Division at Zamboanga, and the Tenth Military District. Communications to the latter headquarters would be extremely important during the early stages of the operation, due to its extensive intelligence net throughout the Island.

Initial radio circuits to senior, subordinate, and supporting units of X Corps would be operated from stations aboard the USS Wasatch, the Flag Ship of CTG 78.2. Control of these circuits would be taken over by the Commanding General, X Corps, on his assumption of command ashore.

Radio communications on 17 April (R-Day) consisted of circuits from the command ship to Eighth Army, the senior commander ashore, and the Air Liaison and Fire Control Parties. When the X Corps Command Post was established at Parang on R plus 1 Day, high-power transmitters were used to establish contact with the 24th Infantry Division, the Tenth Military District, and Eighth Army. As the 24th Infantry Division moved rapidly across the Island, covering 145 miles in 15 days, the only communication was by radio.

As the 31st Infantry Division moved east on Highway #1 to Kabakan and turned north on the Sayre Highway, radio was the only means of communication to this Division. The X Corps Command Post was established at Kabakan on R plus 9 and radio communication was installed to include both divisions and the Rear Echelon at Parang. Radio sets SCR-399 were used from X Corps to divisions and SCR-399's and AT-20 transmitters to Eighth Army. Later a BC-339 transmitter and a BC-447 transmitter were used with Eighth Army, both giving excellent results. When the 108th Regimental Combat Team landed at Bugo, an SCR-188 was used to establish direct contact with this unit from Parang, a distance of 80 miles over dense forests and high mountains.

On 13 June, the Rear Echelon opened at Del Monte. All radio circuits at Parang were taken over by stations located in Del Monte. The command post at Valencia closed on 23 June, and from this time to the end of the operation on 30 June, all radio communication for X Corps was handled at Del Monte.

Electric storms caused serious delays in radio transmissions, especially at night. Thunderstorms anywhere on the Island caused the noise level to increase, and at times it was impossible to receive transmissions. During day-

light hours, except for occasional heavy electric storms, excellent results were obtained. At night, signals weakened about 2300 hours and dropped off steadily so that between 0330 and 0600, frequencies above 3000 Kc were useless. To eliminate the possibility of local interference from teletype and code devices, separate power sources were used for radio receivers.

In spite of numerous atmospheric, geographical, and transportation difficulties, in addition to several extremely complex Command Post displacements and numerous equipment deficiencies and failures, radio communication was excellent throughout the Operation.

VHF RADIO CARRIER SYSTEMS

The first tactical use of multiple-channel VHF radio link systems was made in this Theater during the Leyte Operation in October, 1944. In this instance it was used from Army to Corps Headquarters.

From this experience, it was decided that it was a great value for use within the Corps. In planning the Mindanao Operation, it was decided to give X Corps one VHF Radio Carrier Terminal Team consisting of 2 officers and 24 enlisted men, and two Radio Carrier Link Teams of 6 men, with equipment necessary for the installation of a 125-mile VHF radio circuit, in place of an additional Signal Construction Company. This resulted in a great saving of shipping space and eliminated the necessity for laying thousands of miles of wire.

VHF carrier equipment was not expended nor seriously damaged by the unavoidable rough handling in the frequent displacements. VHF carrier equipment, as used by X Corps, provided 3 voice and 4 teletype channels in each link. One of the voice channels was a clear radio channel. This was not connected to the various telephone switchboards for security reasons, but was used by operations and maintenance personnel for adjusting circuit variations.

Briefly, X Corps used the following links at different phases of the operation:

1. When the X Corps Command Post was at Parang, links were established to MAG 24 at Malabang, the 34th Infantry at Cotabato and the 24th Infantry Division at Sinawingan.

2. At Kabakan, links were established to the X Corps Rear Echelon at Parang, the 24th Division at Talomo, the 31st Division at Malaybalay, and through the switchboard of the 31st Division, the 108th Regimental Combat Team at Del Monte.

3. When the X Corps Command Post moved to Valencia, links were established to the Supply Base at Parang, the 24th Division at Talomo, the 31st Division at Malaybalay and the X Corps Rear Echelon at Del Monte.

4. At Del Monte, links were established to the 24th Division at Talomo, the 31st Division at Malaybalay, the Supply Base at Parang, Eighth Army on Leyte, 10th Military District at Dansalan, and through that switchboard, to MAG 24 at Malabang.

If VHF radio carrier systems had not been available, it would have been extremely difficult to provide satisfactory telephone and teletype communications between the various headquarters without the assistance of a Signal Service Group Headquarters and four Signal Construction Battalions.

MESSAGE CENTER OPERATIONS

The X Corps Message Center opened at 1000, 18 April, at which time SIGABA machines were brought ashore and put into operation. Motor messenger service was initiated to units in the Parang area on 18 April. On 21 April, scheduled water messenger service, using LCMs, was started to Malabang and Cotabato, and Air Courier Service to X Corps from Leyte was established by Navy seaplane service.

Motor messenger service to the divisions soon became unsatisfactory because of the long distances and poor roads. On 30 April, scheduled air courier service was established between Parang, Malabang, Kabakan, Dansalan, Cotabato, and the 24th Infantry Division at Padada using L-5 liaison planes. Water messenger service was discontinued at that time.

The X Corps Command Post opened at Valencia on 9 June. By making maximum use of air transportation, there was no interruption in service. Valencia was made a stop for all air couriers, and as the airstrip was suitable for cargo planes, a special run by C-47 was made whenever traffic was too heavy for L-5s.

The Rear Echelon message center at Del Monte opened on 13 June, personnel required being flown from Parang. As Corps staff sections moved from Parang to Del Monte, additional signal personnel and equipment moved with them to handle the increased load.

A small message center was left at Parang to handle traffic for units remaining. Starting 13 June, air courier service from the Del Monte area was operated to Malaybalay, Valencia, Davao, Kabakan, Maramag, Parang, Cotabato, Malabang, and Dansalan.

The handling of safehand courier and messenger traffic of the units of X Corps would have been impossible without the use of liaison planes. Planes were first made available on 30 April and continued to handle this service throughout the Operation.

RADIO INTELLIGENCE

A Detachment of the 125th Radio Intelligence Company was furnished the 99th Signal Battalion as an experiment to determine the practicability of equipping Corps or Division with these units. Sufficient equipment was furnished to conduct limited tests. In addition, the Detachment acted as a training cadre for the Radio Intelligence Platoon of the 99th Signal Battalion.

Initial installations were made in the Parang and Cotabato areas. Intercept and direction finding procedures were carried out, though direction finding did not prove satisfactory as the exact position of stations could not be determined.

The Radio Intelligence Platoon was attached to the 24th Division during its advance across Mindanao, but rapidity of movement prevented establishment of satisfactory positions. The unit returned to Parang and was subsequently dispatched to the 31st Division at Kabakan. Again no results were obtained. Unit was reattached to the 24th Division at Talomo, and succeeded in obtaining a satisfactory location. One enemy radio station was intercepted and located.

Radio Intelligence units are not practicable in rapidly moving tactical situations unless equipment is mobile mounted, as much time is lost in frequently displacing to new locations. It is believed that light-weight, accurate direction finding equipment can be advantageously used in semi-stabilized situations for location of enemy observation and command posts.

JOINT ASSAULT SIGNAL OPERATION

The 295th Joint Assault Signal Company performed the missions of furnishing communication and direction of Naval gunfire support and close air support. It also assisted in normal communication functions for X Corps.

Shore Fire Control Parties and Air Liaison Parties were assigned to each infantry battalion and regimental headquarters of the 24th Division for the landing operations at Parang and Malabang.

Fire Control Parties remained with these units until they moved out of range of Naval gunfire support. Thereafter, these units assumed the role of Field Artillery Forward Observation Parties, and remained with the 24th Infantry Division during its rapid advance across Min-

danao. Upon reaching the Davao Gulf, their function reverted to that of Shore Fire Control Parties and they directed supporting Naval gunfire during the advance north to Davao. When the Division began its advance west toward Mintal and passed out of range of Naval support, the teams again served as Forward Artillery Observers and assisted in the direction of supporting artillery fire for the duration of the Operation.

Air Liaison Parties remained with the units to which initially attached during the assault phase and furnished valuable service in the direction of close support strikes. When the 31st Division began its advance north from Kabakan along the Sayre Highway, five Air Liaison Parties were attached, performing a similar mission.

The communications personnel, other than those in the Fire Control and Air Liaison Parties, functioned directly under the Corps Signal Officer in assisting the 99th Signal Battalion. A complete radio and message center team was furnished the Malabang Area Command. In addition, teams were furnished for installing and operating switchboards and telephones for numerous service units. When the X Corps Rear Echelon moved from Parang to Del Monte, wire construction and maintenance teams were formed and the 295th JASCO assumed responsibility for the construction and maintenance of all wire lines in the Malabang, Parang, and Cotabato areas.

The varied and outstanding services performed by the 295th Joint Assault Signal Company contributed greatly to the successful outcome of the Mindanao Operation. The unit was awarded the Theatre Citation for heroism and bravery in action against the enemy for the services rendered.

ANNEX 7

OBSERVATIONS, COMMENTS, AND LESSONS LEARNED

The following observations, comments, and lessons learned have been extracted from reports by all combat echelons of the Corps:

Infantry

Night operations proved to be a great success in open terrain where daylight movements would be under enemy observation. Training in night operations should be stressed.

Remote-controlled land mines on roads were successfully combatted by employing flank patrols forward of the point on the road.

The necessity for detailed ground reconnaissance, rather than relying on maps and aerial photographs, was forcibly demonstrated throughout the operation.

Defiladed approaches to positions should be covered with tactical wire, booby traps, and mortar fire. Frequent shifting of outposts confuses the enemy and reduces the danger of outposts being overrun.

Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the establishment of the night perimeter defense to include the siting of automatic weapons and the placing of mines and booby-traps outside the perimeter.

Officers and NCO's should keep their troops informed of the general tactical plan and the reason for their particular portion of the plan.

If possible, infantry replacements should be battle trained and conditioned in relatively quiet areas before being assigned to units heavily engaged with the enemy.

Speed in execution of flanking maneuvers must be impressed on all echelons of command. If made slowly, the enemy will occupy terrain blocking the flanking troops and higher casualties will result.

It appears that the Jap is more and more inclined to sound military tactics as distinguished from the fanatical Bushido spirit. In the defense of the Kibawe-Talomo Trail northwest of Mintal, he fought an excellent delaying action. Resistance was organized at various key points on routes of approach which were strong in automatic weapons and relatively weak in personnel. These positions were generally not in depth, but they covered a broad front and withdrawals were made to successive delaying positions.

The place to kill Japs is on top of the ground. Patient patrol activities, ambushes, rapidity of movement, and coaxing him to attack our organized positions are some of the means of killing him out of his defensive positions. It becomes expensive to have to dig him out of the ground and caves.

Training of both infantry troops and tank crews in their mutual support is badly needed.

Destruction of captured caves and pillboxes was found necessary to prevent infiltration parties reoccupying them.

During our artillery concentrations, the enemy has fired several rounds into our positions. Infantry should differentiate between friendly and enemy shelling and not call off artillery concentrations in the mistaken belief that they are receiving "shorts".

In a night meeting engagement between sizeable forces, the enemy reaction was slow and there appeared to be no coordination between his units. He made repeated small attacks which resulted in heavy enemy casualties.

It is believed that Chemical Mortar units should be attached to infantry units during training so that closer coordination can be effected.

Artillery

Enemy improvised rocket projectiles did not prove effective. Most rockets encountered were 50 pound aerial bombs modified by substituting a propelling charge for the tail assembly. They were launched from a single wooden trough.

In several instances, six gun batteries were employed to meet particular tactical requirements. It proved very successful in that control was centralized in one battery, and it permitted the most economical use of total artillery available.

The success of WP ammunition suggests the increase from 10% to 20% in the allotment.

The 155mm Gun Battalion entered action with over half of the expected life of its gun tubes expended. As a result, the tubes were completely worn out during the operation. Artillery units prior to commitment in an extended operation should be inspected to insure that a minimum of three fourths of the life of the tubes remain. If this condition does not exist, action should be taken to replace the tubes.

The SCR 584 (Antiaircraft Artillery Radar) was employed successfully in direction of ground artillery time-on-target fires on enemy vehicles moving at night.

Photographic planes of a liaison type organically assigned to Corps and Division Artillery would greatly shorten the time necessary to procure required aerial photographs.

Subsequent ground reconnaissance of areas covered by artillery demonstrated the advisability of firing on all buildings and on areas with trails leading into them. In

practically all cases, the buildings or areas were found to be truck parks, machine shops, bivouacs or supply dumps.

The use of 1/4 ton trucks as prime movers proved a successful expedient in keeping light artillery within supporting distance of infantry advancing rapidly across gorges and over weakened bridges.

Captured 20-power binoculars proved far superior to our equipment, and were used extensively at terrestrial OP's.

A 90mm gun battery was effectively employed in an artillery reinforcing role. The 360° traverse enabled targets of opportunity to be engaged without moving artillery to alternate positions.

Air Support

Colored smoke should be made available in 60mm and 81mm mortar and 105mm artillery ammunition, for marking enemy positions for air strikes. This would preclude hostile forces marking friendly front lines with resulting confusion to pilots.

As a general rule, a safety limit of a yard per pound of bomb was applied to close-support aerial bombing.

When support aircraft are based 100 miles or more from target areas, a system of air alerts is highly desirable to reduce the time interval between the request and the actual strike.

Support Aircraft Parties with divisions should be augmented by a forward control party with each infantry battalion. Initiation of requests for close air support and final direction of the strikes should be accomplished by those parties.

Various methods of controlling strikes were utilized. These included the VHF-equipped liaison plane, target

designation by description, coordinates, and distance from a known point; a ground officer guide with the flight leader; marking of friendly lines and enemy targets; and by the joint use of radar and VHF-equipped liaison planes. This latter method requires further experimentation before it can be used extensively.

Miscellaneous

Liaison planes proved extremely valuable for command, communication, and evacuation. In this connection, many occasions arose, during the campaign, that indicated conclusively the advisability of having readily available a helicopter for emergency evacuation or rescue.

The addition of defense platoons to regiments and higher headquarters is suggested to obviate the necessity of assigning combat infantry units to this mission.

With greatly extended lines of communication, additional signal personnel are required in the division signal company.

Most high velocity enemy guns were installed in pill-boxes or embrasures and had a limited traverse. It was found that by careful preliminary ground reconnaissance, positions for direct fire by tanks, TD's, and SPM's could be found from which attacking elements were not subject to return fire.

The 40mm Bofors gun was effectively employed as a direct fire weapon in support of Infantry.

The M-51 .50 calibre multiple machine gun proved valuable in supplementing the ground defense of airfields and rear installations.

The addition of a grid, controlled or arbitrary, on aerial photographs would be valuable for point designation.

All combat units should receive more extensive training in mine detection and removal.

The lack of "weasels" proved a serious handicap. The availability of these carriers for command, liaison, evacuation, and limited supply functions would have greatly simplified contact over difficult terrain.